

WIKIPEDIA

# User:Asmodeus/pseudosciencerfarb

[< User:Asmodeus](#)

## Formal Debate

Byrgenwulf, instead of bashing each other over the head, why not address the nexus of your dispute by inviting Asmodeus or even Mr. Langan himself to a two-party formal debate over the CTMU? There are several potentially suitable forums, such as the formal debate forum at the Science & Philosophy Forums. Although going toe-to-toe, or more appropriately mind-to-mind, with the reported "smartest man in the universe" might be more than a little dangerous. :-) CaveBat 16:04, 17 August 2006 (UTC)

Thanks - an excellent idea. However, since the very inception of the dispute, I have made it clear to Asmodeus I am more than willing to do that (since he is adamant that I don't "understand" the CTMU): only he has consistently refused to indulge. I really appreciate the suggestion, though. Oh well. I suppose I do have other, more edifying things to do, anyway. Byrgenwulf 16:50, 17 August 2006 (UTC)

**Comment:** In fact, Byrgenwulf has already debated me (and DrL) regarding the CTMU. In the course of this debate, which he inaugurated voluntarily and entirely on his own terms, he made at least a dozen major errors regarding the target of his criticism. Since there seems to be a bit of confusion on this score, let me provide a concise summary.

### General errors of classification

In so many words, Byrgenwulf - who identifies himself on his Talk page as Rumpelstiltskin, and claims to work professionally as a graduate instructor in the philosophy of physics - asserted that:

1. ...the CTMU is "pseudoscience" masquerading as "physics". [In fact, the CTMU was always clearly identified as metaphysics (i.e., philosophy), and this was reflected in the original categorization of its Wikipedia article. A philosophical system which does not rely on scientific methodology cannot be "pseudoscience".]
2. ...as a theory of everything, the CTMU must be a theory of physics. [This reflects a misunderstanding of the phrase; the belief that it can only describe a "unified field theory" in physics entails the erroneous assumption that physics is necessarily identical to everything. In fact, a theory of everything is properly classified as philosophical by default.]
3. ...the CTMU was not peer-reviewed. [The journal PCID, in which a paper on the CTMU was published in 2002, is explicitly peer-reviewed by its PhD editorial staff. Although some "ID critics" deprecate the quality of peer review at PCID, peer review is definitely occurring.]
4. ...the CTMU amounts to Intelligent Design theory. [The CTMU predates ID theory and nowhere relies on any part of it.]
5. ...the CTMU is not noteworthy. [In fact, the CTMU was discussed by such major media sources as ABC, the BBC, and Popular Science, and is thus unquestionably noteworthy by Wikipedia standards.]

## Technical errors on Article Talk Page

In so many words, Byrgenwulf (Rumpelstiltskin) asserted that:

1. ...the CTMU is ruled out by Godel's theorems. [It is not, for it nowhere purports to derive formally undecidable truths.]
2. ...the CTMU fails to choose between completeness and consistency. [It clearly prefers consistency, explicitly substituting comprehensiveness for completeness.]
3. ...tautology is devoid of information. [Since an informative distinction can be made between consistent and inconsistent theories, and inconsistencies take the generic logical form "X and not(X)", thus violating the tautology "not(X and not(X))", there exists an informative distinction between tautologies and their negations in the theoretical context...i.e., between those inconsistent theories containing statements which imply "X and not(X)", and those consistent theories which do not. Impressions to the contrary notwithstanding, it is sometimes quite useful to know that a given theory is logically consistent; hence, tautology carries information, albeit of a higher order than the information contained in most scientific theories.]

## Technical errors on AfD (or AfD Talk) Page

In so many words, Byrgenwulf (Rumpelstiltskin) asserted that:

1. ...if X is described as a model or theory, then because this description incorporates "the terminology of science", X must be evaluated as science. [As everyone familiar with logic is well aware, science has no monopoly on the terms *theory* and *model*.]
2. ...interpretations of QM are scientific in nature. [They are in fact *philosophical*, only becoming scientific if and when falsifiable observation statements are extracted from them.]
3. ...the CTMU purports to refute General Relativity. [It does nothing of the kind.]
4. ...scientific paradoxes can only be scientifically resolved. [Any scientific paradox can be reduced to a logical paradox of the generic form "X =  $\sim$ X" (or "X and not(X)"), and thus requires a logical resolution which restores consistency by restoring the tautology "not(X and not(X))" to uniform applicability on all scales of inference. This logical resolution may, or may not, be "scientific" in the sense of falsifiability.]

In other words, out of twelve (12) debating points, Byrgenwulf (Rumpelstiltskin) lost all twelve. To put this in the colorful language of military history and chess, Rumpelstiltskin was "crushed". Consequently, he does not qualify for a rematch.

At such a time as a viable contender becomes available - a qualified, reputable authority whose defeat would do the CTMU and its author some good, and thus make the contest worthwhile - another debate can probably be arranged. Asmodeus 20:11, 19 August 2006 (UTC)

Asmodeus, I hope you do not mind, I have replaced the bullets in your post here with numbers so I can more easily address the points you make.

1. In many of the publications pertaining to the CTMU, it is listed as a "replacement for the Big Bang" etc., while Langan is often referred to as a physicist or a cosmologist. So calling it a pseudophysical theory is not inappropriate. Additionally, the boundaries between physics and philosophy, as you no

doubt know, are somewhat blurred when it comes to foundational problems in physics.

2. I never said that.

3. "Peer review" for the PCID leaves one Hell of a lot to be desired. Rather than the normal process, papers are uploaded to the ISCID website (like arXiv, really), and then should a fellow of the institute (of which Langan is one) "vet" the paper, it is published in the electronic journal. Moreover the ideological and systemic bias inherent in the ISCID itself automatically disqualifies theories representing certain viewpoints from occurring; something which, in principle, could never happen in a proper peer review process.

4. I never said that. The CTMU, however, by imparting a teleological side to reality which is expressed through the manifestation of forms as a result of cognitive/computational processes, sits very comfortably with ID - the totality of reality "intelligently designs" itself, one might say.

5. I stand by that - the CTMU is not noteworthy as a piece of scholarship. It might be noteworthy as a piece of popular trivia.

So that's that list of "errors" dealt with.

1. Prove this. Don't just say "this is a technical error". Actually prove it, using rigour and proper mathematical/logical techniques. I know that Goedel and I can prove that if arithmetic is a part of reality, and the CTMU hence must describe arithmetic, then it falls victim to the Goedel's theorem.

2. If the CTMU is to pride itself on being explicated at the level of rigour of mathematical logic, then it must rely on a formally defined description such as "completeness" as opposed to some numinously defined "comprehensiveness". After all, if it is a theory of everything, then being comprehensive (like, say, the works of the old Konigsberg Clock) doesn't cut it.

3. Manipulating logical tautologies cannot yield an increase in information held by the manipulator (that's what I actually said, not what Asmodeus quoted me as saying). All the information is already implicit in the tautologies. Please don't misquote and misrepresent me just to "score points".

That's that lot.

1. I did not just use "model" or "theory", because the CTMU also claims to be an interpretation of QM as well as offer a new "interpretation of relativity". Moreover, just as the boundaries as to whether or not interpretations of QM are physics or philosophy are by no means clear, and there are good arguments for either view, so there are many (technical!) definitions of "theory". Didn't Asmodeus know that?

2. Not necessarily. That depends on whether one accepts a pure Popperian stance on matters or not (personally, I like Quine: we can falsify all we like, but always come up with another explanation as to why an experiment failed). If physics is the application of rigorous mathematical methods to solve empirical problems about reality (which I think is a fair definition taking account of most things from Newton to qubits), then the problem of interpretation of quantum mechanics, inasmuch as it is a problem of assigning descriptions to empirical as well as mathematical objects, has a good claim to being physics. I am sure many professional physicists, as well as philosophers, would agree with me. The point is, the matter can be convincingly argued both ways (I can well understand it being classified as metaphysics), so it is not a "technical error". The "sum over futures" interpretation of QM, appearing only in a boast to the label of a diagram, would need further detailing by Langan in order to be properly evaluated, of course.

3. Well, either the CTMU must disagree in some respects with relativity, or at least the common interpretation of the formalism, or a host of other anomalies will arise, such as the alteration of physical constants. I remember drumming up an idea very similar to "conspansion" one night after supper, after trying to explain black holes to a twelve year old with the better part of a bottle of

cabernet down my throat: thinking how, if the "size" of things became smaller, the distance between them would appear to increase, giving the appearance of expansion. However, this concept is so riddled with ambiguities (not unlike the idea of "how fast does time flow?") that it barely merits pursuing.

4. I never said that: Arthur Rubin did in the AfD, after I had just pointed out that the Hawking-Hartle model of cosmology was unveiled not in Hawking's pop science writings but in Physical Review B. It really isn't very difficult to report accurately on source material that is right in front of you, is it? I don't think it's an "error" anyway.

So much for the "technical errors". Asmodeus has not shown me to be wanting in a single one of them!

In short, then, Asmodeus has selectively misquoted me, in order to try to make me look like a fool (using my real name, as well, presumably to try to compound my expected embarrassment). However, apart from demonstrating what might either be ignorance or just obstinacy on his part, Asmodeus has hardly made a damning argument...in fact, from what was written above, it seems he has either chosen not to, or is unable to:

represent accurately what is written in a source (a truly elementary ability, I should think)

take account of the vast literature on the logical and philosophical foundations of physics (the CTMU similarly fails in this regard)

demonstrate an understanding of the rigour and care which is necessary when conducting work of this nature

admit that the scholarly credentials of the CTMU are less than lacklustre.

Please Asmodeus, if you are intent on criticising me, do so properly or refrain from doing so: actually make arguments as to why what you say is correct, and what I say is wrong, because I can assure you that many of the points you make, whilst perhaps being defensible in an argument, are by no means "commonly established knowledge"; on the contrary, many of them (like "conspansion" and a teleologically driven self-cognising reality) are decidedly peculiar.

I see from your last paragraph that you are desperate to engage someone qualified, in the hope that by "defeating" them in a debate, the CTMU and its author might be "vindicated". If your performance is anything like as shabby and wishy-washy as that above, I fear for you, me being but a mere student and all, since it is hardly likely that someone more qualified than myself would let things like that slide any more than I would. You claim I "lost on all twelve points". While it is perfectly obvious that you listed just the things that you think I am incorrect on, I did not lose on a single one. Maybe Asmodeus (who may or may not be Langan) cannot even make 12 points properly, let alone defend them.  
Byrgenwulf 13:43, 20 August 2006 (UTC) (forgot to sign yesterday)

**Response:** I'm sorry, Rumpelstiltskin, but you said everything I listed above - often at far greater length - and you were wrong every time. Since you're the one asking for a debate, the burden of proof regarding all of the above points is on you alone. Meet it in something approaching a credible way, and maybe I'll reconsider. But don't try to claim that you asked for a debate and never got one. You did, even though you didn't deserve it and I had no desire to waste my time on it. I'm simply telling you why you're not entitled to another, and why future requests from you along those lines will be summarily denied. Now have a nice day. Asmodeus 21:55, 19 August 2006 (UTC)

Asmodeus, you seem to have missed the point. I am not asking for a debate as an agreeable way to spend my time, because I can think of other, more enjoyable activities. The situation is this. I have made certain statements about the CTMU, which statements you hold are incorrect, and bring up at

every available opportunity in some effort to discredit or belittle me. I do not agree that I am incorrect, and hence wish to be given the chance to defend myself (but made it clear that Wikipedia is not the place for that). Moreover, you have not in any way even shown that I am wrong: you have merely made it clear that your opinions and mine are at odds, by claiming that I am wrong.

The burden of proof, moreover, does not lie with me in many of the points made above. If you hold that I said something, it is up to you to prove that I did, in fact, say it. If I claim that you told me yesterday that you are Langan, I have to prove this if I wish to make use of the fact: I cannot tout it at length while I wait for you to prove otherwise (which you obviously cannot).

The whole issue of a "debate", then, arises solely because we are of different opinions on the validity of the CTMU, and some of my criticisms of it (and I have not even scratched the surface as to where it falls down). A "debate" would be a reasonable method to sort out who is right, surely? That way, if I am incorrect, you get to continue pointing this out. Whereas if I am correct, you stop badmouthing me, and I get to continue saying that the CTMU is wrong.

But until such time as you have actually proven me wrong, you really ought to cease insisting that I am. To take a very simple example, and one of the first that arose: completeness/consistency /comprehensiveness. The CTMU must decide whether it is, as Langan often claims, a theory of the level of rigour of mathematical logic. It must also decide whether it is able to explain absolutely every single phenomenon. In other words, whether every phenomenon is provable as an event ("theorem" - we can surely call the theorems derived from CTMU's axioms "phenomena" or "events") within the theory. If the theory cannot do this, it is not complete. If the CTMU wishes to claim completeness, it must prove that this cannot arise. Actually prove, not just state. Alternatively, if it is not complete, but rather "comprehensive", then first "comprehensiveness" must be formally defined, and then it must be shown that the CTMU meets the requirements imposed by the definition, and that these requirements are necessary and sufficient conditions for explaining the whole of reality. Until such time as this happens (and the CTMU paper does not do this, it is more concerned with explication than proof), I am entitled to point out that the CTMU has not yet done this. And voice my doubts that it can do it at all, since already with arithmetic we have a problem.

CTMU must surely explain arithmetic, and the lesson we learn from Goedel is that we can keep axiomatic systems of arithmetic consistent and complete only by the addition of extra axioms to take account of "Goedelian propositions", formally undecidable statements, but each new axiom added will generate a new Goedelian proposition as we read down the diagonal of the Goedel numbering generated by the theory. But, if the CTMU wishes to be based solely on tautological statements, then it must be shown that these additional axioms which would necessarily have to be included, if only for arithmetic (as one of the elements of reality CTMU must explain), are likewise tautological. Which on a very superficial level it appears they cannot be, since if they were tautological axioms, there would be nothing to gain by adding them to the list, as any theorem derivable with them would be derivable without them (I can add  $\{P \text{ or not } P\}$ , the "fundamental tautology", to any proof without changing it materially at all). Therefore, I maintain, the CTMU fails on these grounds to meet the standards it claims for itself (a "falsification", one could say, inasmuch as an explicitly metaphysical system can be falsified in the true meaning of the word).

I can go into more detail on this and any other of the points above. And particularly relevant, perhaps, to the proceedings here is the issue of whether or not the CTMU makes physical (as opposed to purely metaphysical) claims and whether these claims are accurate and viable or not. But once again Asmodeus, I feel compelled to say that Wikipedia is not the place for this sort of discussion. Should you wish to pursue it, I am prepared to do so. But until such time as you conclusively demonstrate that I am incorrect, I must ask you to refrain from claiming that I am. It is both common courtesy, and the rational way to conduct a discussion.

But the CTMU seems to operate very similarly: make a whole host of claims and assertions, but never actually offer any proof. Use grandiose terms and claim inviolate authority, but never actually support this with concrete evidence. And I am sure that even Dembski himself can admit that the ISCID is not

generally regarded by the community as being a powerhouse publisher of cutting-edge scholarly work, and that the peer-review system implemented there is somewhat different to that at other, more "orthodox" institutes.

Please seriously consider what I have written here, Asmodeus. And stop misrepresenting my competence and my intentions. To reiterate, I am not interested in a debate (which has not occurred, since I have refused to enter into one here) as a form of amusement or similar. Rather, I simply wish to vindicate the assertions I have made, none of which are incorrect, without disrupting the proceedings at Wikipedia with off-topic blather. Although, I am not too concerned, since I have neither a need nor a desire to prove to Langan or any other CTMU buff that I know what I am talking about. Byrgenwulf 13:43, 20 August 2006 (UTC)

**Response:** First, let me try once again to explain something. Informal criteria like uniqueness, plausibility, and authorship can attract attention to a new idea and thus render it notable. To become notable, a theory does not have to appear fully-formed and fully-justified at the outset; it is enough that it be deemed interesting, and in practice, even this criterion is often suspended. Not that it need be suspended for the CTMU; had the CTMU been uninteresting or blatantly wrong, it would never have been deemed presentable by the major media sources which presented it. Conversely, the fact that it was presented by those sources is enough to imply that it is neither uninteresting nor implausible on its face. Although you are entitled to hold a contrary opinion, the fact remains that other people - not necessarily card-carrying academics, but members of the public and the mass media which serve them - evidently regard the CTMU as both interesting and plausible. For purposes of notability, this places the onus squarely on anyone who wants to prove that it is not. But as you observe, Wikipedia is not the place to do that. For the purposes of Wikipedia, it is enough that others have paid attention to the theory and thereby rendered it notable.

That being understood: in response to your assertion that you "haven't even scratched the surface where (the CTMU) falls down", I say that you haven't even scratched the surface of the CTMU. As regards your specific objections, they make no sense. For example, you insist on treating the CTMU as a standard deterministic derivational (substitution) system with a finite set of axioms and no provision for the generation of novel information; that's utterly mistaken, and an error of that magnitude tells me in no uncertain terms that you haven't read the material carefully enough to understand it or meaningfully criticize it. While some of the points you raise appear to reflect a certain amount of insight, this makes it all the harder to understand your evident belief that they have not been addressed. They have indeed been addressed, and neither you nor anyone else has come close to showing that this was done incorrectly. You can claim that it has not yet been done thoroughly enough for your taste, or in what you think are the right places, or that not enough people have publicly found fault with the CTMU, but not that the available material fails to point to any means of resolving the issues that it raises. If some have failed to recognize this information for what it is, then that's unfortunate. But in any case, the CTMU remains notable, and still shares the highest state of any ordinary theory: not yet disproved.

Even if the CTMU had been disproved, it wouldn't matter in the least. When you introduced the integrity of the CTMU into the editorial processes of Wikipedia as a deletional criterion, you violated Wikipedia's policy of not attempting to judge the validity of the ideas it presents. Because of Wikipedia's unfortunate tendency to let uninformed personal opinion override its own policies and guidelines, this violation was supported, at least by the militant, quick-on-the-trigger sector of the Wikipedia community whose participation was misleadingly solicited for that purpose. You now seem to admit in a generic sort of way that it is improper to insert content debates and validity judgments into Wikipedia's editorial processes, but only after having exploited such tactics to get the CTMU article deleted. For this, you owe the Wikipedia community an abject apology. History is full of

colorful characters who have cleverly gamed and manipulated various political systems in order to accomplish their ends; sometimes they did it for the common good, more often not. But even in the former case, their ends were seldom perceived as justifying their means. Similarly, we cannot regard your behavior as justifiable, particularly as your ends and means appear equally questionable.

You and I have had a mutual incivility problem. As you are no doubt aware, this sprang from your initial unfortunate use of pejorative terms like "pseudoscience" and "crank" to tar the CTMU and its author. While this makes you primarily responsible for all of the incivility which followed, I am nevertheless trying to be as fair and as civil to you as possible under the circumstances, and hope that you can manage to reciprocate. But even in that light, I see no absolutely no need to conceal the inalterable fact that your statements regarding the CTMU are erroneous, your errors self-evident (as explained in brackets), and your incorrectness proven beyond any shadow of doubt. These observations have nothing to do with incivility; they have to do with my inalienable right, and responsibility, to call a spade a spade. Asmodeus 22:28, 20 August 2006 (UTC)

OK. Tell you what, Asmodeus, here's an idea: a "ceasefire" of sorts. I still maintain that the criticisms I have raised here of the CTMU have not been addressed at a suitable level of detail: simply saying "you're wrong because you haven't read the paper properly" doesn't cut it. Incidentally, I understand how the CTMU is alleged to allow for the generation of novel information (part of this "self-determinacy", not so, and "unbound telesis" stuff - the ouroboros springs to mind...), but, in the profound words of your friend and mine, John Wheeler, "I am skeptical as Hell"; nay, more, I am certain it is wrong. But anyway, we both seem to be in agreement that this is not the place for this sort of discussion.

As far as the AfD goes, I certainly did not make use of doubts about content to get the article deleted: rather, I made use of policies such as notability, verifiability, vanity, reliable sources, etc. But, one of your major gripes seems to be that I notified members of WikiProject Pseudoscience about the proceedings (actually, I didn't: it was one User:Christopher Thomas who posted notification of the AfD to that board, but I had previously brought the fiasco to his attention - I think by asking for assistance in editing the CTMU from that "WikiProject" - so please don't go hounding him...I'll shoulder the abuse). You maintain that since the CTMU cannot be classified as pseudoscience, the proceedings were somehow "rigged". I maintain that there is a sense in which the CTMU can be tarred with the pseudoscientific brush. However, the only way to settle who is right here, would be an in-depth philosophical discussion of not only the CTMU but also the nature of the physics/pseudophysics /metaphysics/pseudophilosophy boundaries. Which really ought not to be happening here.

The bottom line is that the CTMU article was deleted not because the CTMU is pseudoscience, wrong, or otherwise malformed. It was deleted because the Wikipedia community deemed it to be an unnecessary addition to this encyclopaedia. Perhaps the people who commented in the AfD had a bias against pseudoscience: I wish there was more of that here, as Wikipedia is being abused by various factions to give encyclopaedic legitimacy to their kooky ideas. I am not by any means saying that orthodox scholarship is necessarily right simply because it is orthodox scholarship, but I am saying that of any given segment of society, it is the most likely to hold a position closest to the triad of virtues: Reason, Logic and Reality, which I feel very strongly an encyclopaedia should be imparting to its readers (after all, was this not Diderot's dream?).

I have been acting only, as you put it with reference to yourself, to exercise my inalienable right, and responsibility, to call a spade a spade. The only possible way in which I might have transgressed was in encyclopaedically labelling Langan a crank. I accept that is a little "below the belt", so to speak, and so I cordially ask Langan to accept my apology for that. All my other actions here, I maintain, have been perfectly acceptable, and in perfect accordance with fact.

Particularly, and since this issue has been cropping up in the Fringe Theories proposed-policy/guideline/thingummy, I feel we need to draw a distinction here. You say that if the CTMU were

blatantly wrong, the mass media would not have seen fit to comment on it. I disagree. Muscle and Fitness' editorial team is not qualified to decide whether or not a given theory is a viable replacement for the Big Bang. Nor is the BBC. What is notable is that there is some allegedly highly intelligent chap, who, as such an intelligent person is almost socially obliged to do, has a grand theory about the world. This is what the media has reported on, and this is what Wikipedia should contain in articles. Since the media has not seen fit to comment on the technical details of the theory, it being unimportant to their particular angle on the story, this means that the technical details of the theory have not yet had their notability established. Incidentally, an illustration of just how magnificently incompetent the media is to comment on the technical merits of a theory is found in , being "cat-mew"?) and "quantemonolocality" or something like that (quantum non-locality?!?). If they cannot even transcribe the words correctly, how can they be considered a reliable indicator of the viability of the theory?

Now, I can understand, I think, Langan's frustration. He no doubt believes that he has come up with a truly valuable theory. While his insistence on it being 100% correct, and being "isomorphic" to all other correct theories, is far from justified or even rational, I believe, the CTMU is certainly not silliness on the level of the Time Cube. And, his ideas have been resoundingly ignored by orthodox scholarship, maybe even unfairly (and I do believe that Langan knows deep down that the ISCID is not exactly "up there"). Academic accreditation is not a failsafe arbiter of quality of thought, as the Sokal hoax and the Bogdanov affair amply demonstrate: but it is the best "gatekeeper" we have in the world at the moment, that can have some claim to objectivity, transcending individual opinions of a piece of work, no matter how educated, informed, or intelligent the holders of these opinions may be.

If I had my way, all articles relating to postmodernism would be removed from this encyclopaedia as well. However, since this has taken off as a thoroughly objectionable trend in academic circles, it would seem that it unfortunately meets notability requirements. I can even imagine Langan looking at that postmodern crap, and wondering why, if that can be included, his theory cannot - if academe can idolise the monstrous out-spewings of Derrida and Lacan, then surely it cannot be an institution to be taken seriously. When I was much younger, I was a great fan of Ayn Rand. She came up with a bon mot which goes something like "the uncontested absurdities of today become the unquestioned truths of tomorrow". I think that is very true, and regard it as the job of everyone with half a brain, and I can assure you I am possessed of a little more than that, to question today's absurdities. It is my opinion, which I feel I can amply justify with sound argument, that the CTMU is just one of those absurdities. Obviously, some people would disagree with me, and think my criticism of it to be the absurdity.

So, my idea of a ceasefire goes like this. I shall cease being so utterly disparaging of the CTMU and its creator. If I do that, then from what I understand of your complaints against me, you can stop being so utterly disparaging of me. This is not to say that we must agree with one another, or even "agree to disagree"; that's pathetic. No, I am still entitled to say that I think the CTMU is incorrect, and you are still entitled to say that you think I am wrong about that. But we can, I am sure, both do it without the invective rhetoric. The issue of the AfD/DRV is a little sticky, since you believe that I acted in bad faith, maliciously "gaming the system", as you put it. Now, I am not sure whether the "we" in your statement is a turn of speech, or an attempt to speak for the Wikipedia community as a whole. If the latter, I must say I do not think that that is an accurate positioning of yourself, but never mind. I can assure you that my actions were not malicious at all; and statements like "Byrgenwulf has been shown to have acted in violation of Wikipedia policy" are not accurate, either. I have not "been shown" to have done that, you are "of the opinion" that I have done that, an opinion I dispute most vehemently. So, while it may be an effective demagogic tactic (and something I have learnt very quickly in this last month is that the Wikipedia community operates something like a post-Soviet mob-frenzy, not something which I believe is very conducive to the processing of knowledge), it is nonetheless an argumentative fallacy, and one which is mightily incivil to boot.

Please tell me, using quotes from Wikipedia policy documents, exactly where and how you feel my actions were against policy. Do it here, in a civil fashion (as opposed to yet another shrill cry of "foul!" over the din and roar of those abominable deletion discussions), and I will do my best to address your concerns squarely and head on. Then we can work through the issue and attempt to find some



manner of resolution. I am personally loathe to use formal, bureaucratic mechanisms of dispute resolution, preferring to deal with things myself. I trust that that is an attitude with which you can sympathise; and I am not, despite what you might think, an unreasonable person - I am quite willing to discuss things rationally and calmly...I think many of us have become somewhat worked up over the past few weeks. So, let's give it one more bash, on explicit terms of civility this time, in order to put this whole saga to rest; but if this fails, then perhaps seeking some sort of "higher counsel" might be in order, especially since my intuition tells me a resurrection of the CTMU article is being prepared.

Byrgenwulf 10:34, 21 August 2006 (UTC)

**Response:** Please, Rumpelstiltskin. I didn't come here to explain to you, for the twentieth time, what you did wrong - how you initially vandalized the article with uncivil epithets like "pseudoscience" and "crank", gamed the system, turned the AfD and DR into content debates, misrepresented the topic of the article after being repeatedly corrected, and misleadingly solicited votes. We've wasted enough time on that already, and if you were sincere about doing the right thing, you'd have admitted it by now. I'm here because you claimed to have asked for a debate on the CTMU and been denied. That was just another misrepresentation.

Driven and comforted by your "certainty" that the CTMU is wrong, you succeeded, by hook and by crook, in recruiting enough support to delete the CTMU article from Wikipedia, thus depriving its readers of something that just might, if you are mistaken, be both true and important. Congratulations. But this raises a question: if by some chance you turn out to be wrong - if the target of your attack turns out to be correct - what will you yield in atonement? Remember, there's no such thing as a free lunch; sooner or later, everyone has to pay the piper and clear the ledger. Of what would you like your atonement to consist? Asmodeus 17:00, 22 August 2006 (UTC)

Alright, Asmodeus, I tried. I still resolutely deny that any of your accusations above are true, but since you insist that they are, and refuse to produce any evidence other than your own opinion, I shall stop arguing about that, lest this discussion degenerate even further into a Punch-and-Judy style "Oh no I didn't"/"Oh yes he did" waste of everyone's time. Asmodeus has also refused to discuss the CTMU on its merits anywhere but in the deletion proceedings and on the article talk page, where I felt such a discussion would be out of place, and hence refused to be drawn into it, offering to discuss it elsewhere rather. But whatever. Arguments about arguments are generally best left to lawyers and continental philosophers.

As for my "atonement", should I ever be proven wrong...how about my soul? I was told I was going to Hell for my efforts to point out some basic facts of reason and reality to the inventor of "Symmetric Relativity"...and I am probably going there for other reasons anyway, so I figure signing it away to Langan (or his daemonic avatar Asmodeus) would be a just "atonement" for putting him down. And, well, the chances of this ever coming to pass are about the same as me having a soul anyway...especially since the CTMU would seem to imply that I actually do have a soul of some form (and given the insistence on falsification made by Asmodeus above, surely the CTMU can, of course, never be proven correct...it can only be disproven, and a rigorous disproof first of all requires a proof that at least makes a reasonable stab at being rigorous, something we have yet to see with the CTMU). What do you think? :P Byrgenwulf 21:35, 22 August 2006 (UTC)

**Response:** If you felt that it was inappropriate to discuss the CTMU in the deletion proceedings and on the article talk page, then why did you insist on doing so, thus forcing others to respond to your attacks? But since you plainly have no acceptable answer, let's move on. May we now surmise that if you are incorrect about the CTMU, Langan owns whatever remains of your soul (after you have finished corrupting and/or attempting to destroy it, as by your own admission, you seem to have somehow been doing)? The answer to this question is important, so please think hard about it before answering. Asmodeus 18:31, 23 August 2006 (UTC)

Asmodeus, I have no soul. I am not trying to destroy it, any more than I am trying to destroy Santa Claus. But certainly, if I have one, Langan is welcome to it, should he earn it. Byrgenwulf 19:53, 23 August 2006 (UTC)

Asmodeus, you say, "the CTMU remains notable, and still shares the highest state of any ordinary theory: not yet disproved". That implies that all debaters have operated under some agreed-to and well-defined criteria of proof and that all CTMU statements have passed those criteria. Yet the actual state of affairs is that Byrgenwulf has been trying to get you to commit to any criteria by which the CTMU can be evaluated, but you allow no means of evaluation. So can you please tell us, if not by physical observations or logico-mathematic deduction, how would anyone actually go about trying to disprove the CTMU? In short, what's your definition of "proof"? And can you provide a rigorous definition for "comprehensiveness"? CaveBat 00:24, 22 August 2006 (UTC)

**Response:** People who write and/or edit articles in Wikipedia are not required to "prove" the theories about which they are writing. It suffices that the theories be notable...e.g., because they were mentioned and discussed in the mass media.

But just to be polite, I'll point out that there are many things in the world that are not deterministic, but still comprehensive with respect to what they purport to describe. Tautologies are comprehensive with respect to all possible meanings of their sentential variables. Probability distributions are comprehensive with respect to a set of possible events. Quantum wave functions are nonclassical and weird, but they're supposed to be comprehensive with respect to the possible states of a physical system. General relativity purports to be comprehensive with respect to the structure of the spacetime manifold (except on very small scales, but that's life). A lot of people think that science is comprehensive with respect to reality at large - that if science can't identify, explain or predict it, then it can't possibly be real. But this never gets proven. Why not? Because under the current definition of scientific methodology, it can't be.

The CTMU paper in PCID says that with respect to a theory of reality, comprehensiveness means nonexclusion of true statements regarding the universe (as opposed to the deterministic generation of all true statements about the universe - that would be completeness). Just as tautologies hold under all possible meanings of their sentential variables, a comprehensive theory of reality must hold regardless of any undecidables that happen to emerge as the universe evolves; it has the nature of a metaphysical tautology distributing over the physical part of reality and any additional structure thereby entailed (otherwise, reality couldn't enforce its own consistency, and there would be no telling what it contains). Proving that would be as easy as proving that a rose is a flower...essentially, it's true by definition.

The CTMU is based on principles that are supposed to be true of reality as defined on the model-theoretic level, i.e., on the level of the general correspondence between theories or languages and their universes, or equivalently, between the universe and a generic observer of the universe. Here's the good news: the paper gives analytic justifications for a number of such principles. If you want to criticize them, all you have to do is read the paper. But steel yourself, because here comes the bad news: you'll have to go someplace else to argue about it. See, Wikipedia isn't the place.

By the way, I notice that you don't have a user page or a talk page. Why not grab a footful of ceiling and stay a while? That way, if you want to start up a conversation, you won't always have to use somebody else's talk page. You can use your own instead. Asmodeus 17:00, 22 August 2006 (UTC)

CaveBat, you cut somewhat to the quick with your comment above...I'm just a little worried though, for CTMU's sake (nah, not really). Because if "logico-mathematical deduction" is to be ruled out as a

method for investigating it, and I agree with you that this would seem to be the case on some levels, then we are left with the problem of induction, which has plagued thinkers from Hume to Popper. But here have a dichotomy; Asmodeus makes much use of Popperian terminology and ideas...despite the fact that Popper showed quite convincingly just what a humdinger of a problem the problem of induction really is. And the CTMU doesn't seem to acknowledge the problem, let alone attempt to solve it, although arguably induction forms quite an integral part of the necessary machinery for the CTMU to work. It makes use of inductive-type reasoning which I think is extremely naive: good common sense, but unfortunately, as Asmodeus himself pointed out above, life doesn't always turn out to be as naively neat and smooth when probed at the deepest level. (It's quite loopy, actually, I daresay, although many people might want to string me up for that...)

Asmodeus, have you read what Quine had to say on the nature of the analytic/synthetic distinction? I ask not to be impertinent, but rather because what you wrote above doesn't seem to take account of it, or even give it a token nod...your argument (and indeed the CTMU) rests on the assumption that there can somehow be "logical primitives" (such as  $\text{Mind}=\text{Reality}$ ) which can be meaningfully rendered into so-called "tautological" principles to generate the "super-tautology" that is the CTMU. You see, I understand what you're trying to say about the comprehensiveness thing...the theory needn't churn out predictions (or necessarily statements) like a Turing machine, but rather, any true proposition which does come to pass must be explainable from within the theory, and a posteriori be a necessary truth. Very well.

However, coming up with a theory along those lines means that the theorist will eventually find himself riding a dilemma: either he faces a problem a la Quine where it turns out that his axioms are not tautological, because they actually entail a whole lot of other, hidden assumptions - as in the case of a rose being a flower: it certainly is analytically true, of course, but not tautologically true, because it depends on a suitable definition for both rose and flower (and hence an indefinitely large semantic network) for its truth-value; on the other horn, if definitions and so forth are to be excluded from the formal system, then all we shall have is a manipulation of trivial statements like  $\{P \text{ or not } P\}$ . This would require Langan to show how the manipulation of these statements can result in, for example, us human beings typing and reading these words over the Internet (for the other bits of his theory to work, like panentheism, "unbound telenosis", etc.). This is something Langan does not do in the CTMU paper, and something which is actually impossible to do in toto. Bootstrapping systems are fascinating, but ideas such as  $(\text{Mind}=\text{Reality})$  are not tautological in themselves. They are only "tautological" by argument, or by assumption - both of which methods Langan uses to justify them - but this means that they are not true tautologies.

So I am afraid I still don't think you have offered an adequate explanation. Byrgenwulf 21:35, 22 August 2006 (UTC)

**Response:** Another day at the docks, another Red Herring Fish-Off. The rules: first, make a bogus statement about the CTMU designed to convince the neophytes that you know what it says; follow it up with a broad allusion to some authority figure of yore, e.g. W.V.O. Quine, which may or may not falsify the bogus statement that you made but sounds good anyway; observe that the CTMU has been falsified by (e.g.) Quine, no less, through the bogus statement in question; and then chortle silently in the knowledge that you've managed to pull off another rigged "debate" about the CTMU, even though your opponent has declined! Finally, lean back and collect the grand prize in the Fish-Off: eight more errors, bringing the grand total to an even twenty ( $12 + 8 = 20$ ).

1. Rumpelstiltskin claims that "logico-mathematical deduction" has been ruled out as a method for investigating the CTMU. [Obviously not. There's plenty of deductive processing in the CTMU, at least for those who read (not just scan) the available material on it.]

2. Rumpelstiltskin claims that the CTMU does not acknowledge the problem of induction. [The CTMU refers to it directly...and offers a new approach to dealing with it. The problem of induction refers to

the fact that in reasoning from specific local observations to all of reality, one must assume the uniformity of nature, which is really what one is attempting to infer by empirical induction. In other words, since one is assuming what one is trying to infer, one is reasoning "tautologically", in a circular fashion. This problem is ubiquitous in the empirical sciences, and it is why no general scientific inferences can be proven. The CTMU, however, is not mere empirical science. Instead of looking for patterns in empirical data, making up a theory to fit them, and then treating the ingredients of the theory as "universal laws", it looks at the general correspondence between theories and data in search of logical (model-theoretic) universals, and then deduces their consequences. It does not assume the uniformity of nature; it infers the uniformity of nature, explaining why certain fundamental properties of nature have to be universal on logical grounds. This is a substantially new approach to the problem, and it is one of the main strengths of the unique theory that Rumpelstiltskin hilariously claims to "understand".]

3. Rumpelstiltskin claims that the CTMU makes use of inductive reasoning. [Only in the logical, as opposed to the empirical or probabilistic, sense...the sense in which any variable or relation can be generalized to an antecedent by inverse substitution. As explained above, the CTMU elevates empirical induction to the model-theoretic level of reasoning, thus circumventing the problem of induction.]

4. Rumpelstiltskin claims that it is wrong to assume that there can somehow be "logical primitives" (such as  $\text{Mind}=\text{Reality}$ ) which can be meaningfully rendered into so-called "tautological" principles to generate the CTMU supertautology. [The CTMU does not make assumptions; it works from the inarguable fact that the universe exists, and that we are observing it. The  $M=R$  principle simply asserts that mind and reality have a perceptual intersect, which can then be generically used as the syntax of a new sort of mathematical structure called an intrinsic language. The CTMU shows that reality must conform to this structure as a condition of its existence, and accordingly identifies the universal properties of this structure as universal properties of reality at large.]

5. Rumpelstiltskin claims that "a rose is a flower" is not tautological. ["A rose is a flower" amounts to a semantic tautology. To see this, note that "rose = flower"  $\rightarrow$  "flower = flower"  $\rightarrow$  " $X = X$ " (a tautology). It is, however, more refined and arguably more informative than a propositional tautology, because less general. Like other tautologies, this semantic tautology takes its form from the self-identity of the universe as a whole:  $U = U$ . (The identity relation is a wonderful thing, especially when manifest in the logical self-similarity of its single reland.)]

6. Rumpelstiltskin says that the CTMU fails because it requires an "indefinitely large semantic network" for its semantic (definitional) tautologies. [The CTMU invokes a general principle called the MAP for this purpose. The MAP says that the network is closed. The PCID paper even contains a drawing which illustrates this form of closure.]

7. Rumpelstiltskin claims that Langan has failed in that he does not show how the manipulation of tautologies like "P or not-P" can result in the world we see around us, and that in fact, this is "actually impossible to do". [Langan does more than merely "manipulate tautologies" like  $P$  or  $\sim P$ ; he generalizes the tautology concept and thereby takes logic to its inductive limit: a protean ontological groundstate relating to the universe, from within the universe itself, as ontic potential. If one likes, one can regard this protean ur-tautology as a primitive form of "selfhood" which gives rise to tautologies and "logical primitives" alike. Logic and the universe exist; hence, this property must hold, and assumptions have nothing whatsoever to do with it.]

8. Rumpelstiltskin says that although bootstrapping systems are fascinating, ideas such as ( $\text{Mind}=\text{Reality}$ ) are not tautological in themselves, further claiming that Langan erroneously uses

arguments and assumptions to establish that they are tautological, and that for this reason, they are not true tautologies. [Once again, the CTMU does not rely on assumptions. If Rumpelstiltskin can't see this, it is no doubt because he does not understand how CTMU principles have been logically inferred.]

9. Rumpelstiltskin says that CaveBat has "still not offered an adequate explanation." [With this, I happen to agree. Good thing - otherwise, Rumpelstiltskin's error count would be 21 instead of "just" 20!]

Twenty (20) errors and counting. Asmodeus 18:31, 23 August 2006 (UTC)

What utter nonsense. A Fish-Off it most definitely is. It's hard to catch all these Red Herrings, what with Asmodeus seemingly running a breeding farm with a direct channel of access to this little dockside quay. So let's see...

I never said that. I said that logico-mathematical deduction would appear to be ruled out on some levels. An example of this is that the CTMU is not a "theory" which produces "theorems" which may be deduced(!) from the assumptions, but rather simply requires the non-exclusion of truth. Please do try not to slant what I say, Asmodeus...I am, believe it or not, sharp enough to pick it up. Unless you're doing it unintentionally, in which case I apologise...I suppose Hanlon's razor might be a good tool here.

If the CTMU looks at the the "general correspondence" between theories and data, and then infers from whatever particulars to whatever generalisation, it is making use of induction. It does not overcome the problem, I am afraid, only attempt to sweep it under the carpet with the aid of flash-bangs and polysyllables to distract from what is happening. How are we to know that the principle {not(P and not P)} always holds? Only ever through empirical observation and the endless (and probably futile) vigil for a falsification of it.

Well, "reasoning", I would hope, ought to be logical (otherwise we might as well give up right now). It is obvious to anyone reading this that I was talking about logical induction there. I don't actually know what your point is.

You're tangling your meta-loops here. This observation, being, as you call it, a "perceptual intersect", is inherently a product of mind. Existence, for that matter, is a predicate the existence of which (sorry) cannot be assured outside of mind. Not that I am promoting idealism, but the fact is that these matters are far more subtle than the CTMU allows for. Moreover, at some point, we have to include logical primitives of some form.

"A rose is a flower" is an analytically true statement. While it may be a semantic tautology, it is not a logical tautology, and there is a huge difference. Moreover,  $M=R$  is only a semantic tautology (given an argument like "perceptual intersects" and things), not a logical tautology. If the CTMU deals in mere semantic tautologies, analytic truths, then it is somewhat meaningless. Which is the point I was making, as, I thought, was obvious.

The MAP amounts to an assumption (or "externally imposed requirement for consistency's sake"). Moreover, it is expressed in a meta-language, not the object-language, of the theory. Try to untangle those meta-loops, Asmodeus. And drawings, I am afraid, do not impress me much when it is proof and rigour I am after.

"Generalising the tautology concept and taking it to its inductive limit", Asmodeus, is a little like homeopathy...the mistaken idea that things become more potent, the less relevant substance they have. Langan does not show how this can give rise to anything. He says it does. There is one Hell of a difference. I can say that integrating the Wheeler-DeWitt equation yields a plate of fish and chips as an answer. I can probably even give a reasonably coherent argument to that effect. But it doesn't make it true. Once again, whatever gives you the idea that logic exists as anything apart from a human

construct, an aesthetic imposition upon man's environment? No, a theory like the CTMU must explain why logic works as means we use to function in our world, but without the use of logic itself, otherwise, once again, we get our meta-loops all knotted up.

What a whopper. The CTMU's principle are logically inferred, are they? From what? Empirical observations? Rational cogitations? The pink, pink sky? The point is, the buck has to stop somewhere. Langan tries to stop the buck by imposing constraints like MAP. But this is itself an assumption, or, if you like, an "observation" (be it ever so rational and well-motivated, even seemingly "necessitated"). Finally, if the CTMU's principles are logically inferred, that means that there must be some sort of argument to arrive at them. You're contradicting yourself, Asmodeus, and painting yourself ever more tightly into that corner.

It is perfectly clear to any reasonable person I was addressing Asmodeus, not CaveBat there; and it is also perfectly clear that Asmodeus knows this. Er hm.

In actuality, the CTMU amounts to little more than the realisation that "I can make a list of principles such that nothing in the world contradicts these principles". Which is completely trivial. Here's one: "Everything happens by God's will, including his own existence". Yes, yes, I know that the CTMU is "isomorphic" to that one, in a rather distorted sense of the word "isomorphic". But once again, the truth, and hence worth, of a statement like that is contingent upon the semantic meanings of the various words in it. It suffers from Russell's paradox and no end of other logical syndromes. It does not, and cannot, break out from its own rung on the ladder of "metalevels", and simply including an assumption (yes, that's right, an assumption) which stipulates this, does not solve the problem.

As for "falsifying" the CTMU with Quine, that old "authority figure of yore"...well, I don't know so much. You see, Popper intended the term specifically to refer to empirical theories. Now I know it's been tossed around a bit in the discussion here, but I do feel I ought to insist that it is used properly, especially given Asmodeus' insistence that the CTMU has no empirical content (or if he has not insisted on that yet, he probably ought to, since otherwise we start opening the floodgates of pseudoscience). But I do feel that some of the points Quine made adequately point out the naivety and flawed nature of the CTMU; and this is ironic considering that Quine did indeed write about half a century ago, and yet Langan fails, seemingly, to take account of this and a host of other arguments (indeed, any arguments whatsoever, other than a sorry platoon of bedraggled straw men and Langan's very own virtuoso musings).

Asmodeus, this error counting thing is getting more than a little annoying, especially since it is perhaps more accurately a record of how many straws you have been trying to grasp at to save yourself from sinking. Unfortunately, this does not seem to be working. Byrgenwulf 19:53, 23 August 2006 (UTC)

**Response:** The Fish-Off continues.

Why 1-8 remain erroneous:

1. There are several kinds of "theory". The CTMU is certainly a theory in the general sense that it is a descriptive or explanatory function  $T$  which takes the universe  $U$  as an argument:  $T = T(U)$ . However, instead of employing logical deduction to derive theorems from axioms, it employs logical induction to derive the overall structure of reality from certain necessary properties thereof (which are themselves deduced from the facts of existence and perception). That is, it derives the unique structure capable of manifesting all of the required properties.

2,3. Logical induction does not have to assume the uniformity of nature; it can be taken for granted that nature is uniformly logical. For if nature were anywhere illogical, then it would be inconsistent, and could not be coherently perceived or conceived. But if something cannot be coherently perceived or conceived, then it cannot be recognized as reality, and has no place in a theory of reality. So for

theoretical purposes, reality exhibits logical homogeneity, and logical induction thus escapes Hume's problem of empirical induction. (Q.E.D.)

4. The CTMU is in fact the only theory that coherently allows for the mental dimension of existence and perception. It does this by ascribing to both mind and reality a common generic syntax including such basic ingredients as logic and arithmetic. If not for this syntactic interface, mind and reality could not interact, and observation and science would be absolutely impossible. Since observation and science are in fact possible, the structure of reality must incorporate this syntax and its entailments and grammatical products, which implies SCSPL and the CTMU. (Q.E.D.)

5. Analytically true statements merely instantiate tautologies. Again, "rose = flower" --> "flower = flower" --> "X = X" (a tautology). Circular definitions mirror circular logic, which relates to them as syntax.

6. The MAP is not an assumption. The MAP is implied by SCSPL closure. For if reality is not ultimately closed, then entities outside reality can be incorporated in real structures and processes; but in that case they are real, and thus inside reality. This contradiction implies that reality is ultimately closed with respect to all real relations and operations, including the definition operation as applied to reality itself. Hence, reality is ultimately semantically closed with respect to its own definition, and the MAP must hold. (Q.E.D.)

7. Logic works as a means of real-world functioning because it comprises the rules of cognition, and we know reality only insofar as it is cognitively accessible to us. Equivalently, logic is included in the syntax of SCSPL, and thus distributes over reality. This is very well explained in the PCID paper.

8. Again, the MAP is not an assumption; it is implied by SCSPL closure, a necessary property of ultimate reality.

(9. If you wish to avoid confusion, then don't address comments intended for me to somebody else. If the comments of others merit your attention, then they deserve their own responses.)

Further errors (10-17):

10. Rumpelstiltskin claims that the CTMU actually amounts to "little more than...a list of principles such that nothing in the world contradicts these principles", and is thus "completely trivial". [On the contrary, certain nontrivial conclusions have been drawn from the principles in question. Of course, in order to locate them, one would have to read the available material.]

11. Rumpelstiltskin claims that although the CTMU is "isomorphic" to "Everything happens by God's will, including his own existence", the truth of this statement comes to rest on the meanings of the various words in it. [This trivially applies to any statement whatsoever. However, words typically refer to content, and the content of theology cannot be dismissed a priori as mere semantics. To prove that theology is empty of content, Rumpelstiltskin would have to prove the nonexistence of God. But he has not yet done this.]

12. Rumpelstiltskin claims that the CTMU, like the statement to which it is isomorphic, suffers from Russell's paradox and myriad other logical syndromes. [SCSPL exhibits conspansive duality, which describes a relationship between two complementary forms of inclusion (descriptive and topological inclusion) which can be used to resolve the set-theoretic paradoxes. This duality is implied by the necessity of SCSPL closure with respect to composition and attribution (see #6 above), being associated with the SCSPL properties hology and triality.]

13. Rumpelstiltskin claims that the CTMU does not, and cannot, break out from its own rung on the ladder of "metalevels." [By definition, it is the top rung of that ladder and thus subsumes all lower rungs (metalanguages subsume object languages). So the CTMU applies to all "metalevels".]

14. Rumpelstiltskin claims that although the CTMU includes an assumption which stipulates such a "breakout", this does not solve the problem. [Again, the CTMU contains no assumptions. Repeating an error after it has been identified as an error amounts to a new error.]

15. Rumpelstiltskin claims that I have insisted that the CTMU has no empirical content...or that if I have not yet done so, I should do so immediately in order to avoid "opening the floodgates of pseudoscience". [I have not said that the CTMU is free of empirical content. In fact, it has some direct and rather a lot of indirect empirical confirmation (through its natural integration of certain empirically-confirmed theories in its overall model-theoretic framework). However, because it explicitly does not rely on empirical induction or empirical confirmation, it does not purport to be empirical science, and thus cannot be called "pseudoscience".]

16. Rumpelstiltskin claims that Langan fails to take account of the fact that Quine pointed out the naivety and flawed nature of the CTMU half a century ago, and moreover, fails to take account of anything but his own musings. [Quine pointed out nothing of the kind. Furthermore, it is not smart for somebody without an extremely high level of intelligence to assume that by taking a handful of college courses presided over by institutionalized hacks, he or she automatically becomes better able to spot problematical issues than someone identified by the mass media as the "smartest man in (America, the World, etc.)"...even if one thinks that the mass media may be mistaken. In fact, it is so unintelligent that it comprises yet another error.]

17. Rumpelstiltskin claims this his error count is really a record of how many straws I have grasped at to save myself from sinking. [Not quite true. I've merely been encouraging Rumpelstiltskin to dogpaddle vigorously enough to barely stay afloat in the debate which he has insisted on having.] This brings Rumpelstiltskin's total error count to  $12 + 8 + 8 = 28$  and counting. Good work, Rumpelstiltskin! (By the way - if you object to this error count, then stop making errors, and I won't have to count them.) Asmodeus 18:00, 24 August 2006 (UTC)

Hmmmm...Asmodeus says that if I want this error count to stop, I ought to stop making errors. Only, I don't actually think I am making errors. I am making points with which Asmodeus disagrees. This does not equate with "error". For after all, even if Asmodeus were the smartest man in the world, this would not imply that he is factually correct 100% of the time. Much of the time, perhaps, but not all the time. A truly smart man could admit that.

1. That is by and large what I was saying. I did not say that the CTMU necessarily rules out deduction completely as a form of reasoning; merely, that it does not operate along those lines to induce its own truths. So if I made an "error", then so did Asmodeus and/or Langan.

2,3. Quote Asmodeus: "Logical induction does not have to assume the uniformity of nature; it can be taken for granted that nature is uniformly logical". This is a paradox. The assumption of "uniformity of nature" is precisely taking for granted that "nature is uniformly logical". It is making exactly this assumption with which Hume, and Popper after him, had such a problem. And I disagree that "if something cannot be consistently perceived or conceived" then it cannot be recognised as "reality". Because this depends on our definition of reality. Now I understand that Langan's particular definition of reality has this requirement, this uniformity of nature principle, and that this is one of the ways in which the CTMU is rendered "tautological". But this is not a necessary and self-evident truth, as it would need to be for the CTMU to work. A synthetic truth, not analytic. But even if analytically true, nonetheless only true on the semantic level.



4. I see your point about the "interface" between mind and reality, but disagree that the CTMU is the only theory that meets the requirements. For example, but stipulating that arithmetic and logic are aesthetic impositions upon the environment, we can explain how reality miraculously appears to behave according to their dictates...and organisms which evolve viable ways of describing reality are organisms which can better survive in it, to breed and pass their viable ways on. Of course, this leads to the Kantian dichotomy of *das Ding fuer uns* and *das Ding an sich* in most applications, but it needn't. If reality is defined precisely as the human construct which models the human environment, we get around this problem. But then, the CTMU is not entirely true anymore, since the definition of reality is different (this possible reality allowing for the "anomalies"), and hence the CTMU is not tautological in the truest sense.

5. Yes, analytically true statements instantiate semantic tautologies. But they are not necessarily tautologous: I could define, in my peculiar dialect of English, rose to be "that feeling you get when five minutes feels like an hour". Now "that feeling you get when five minutes feels like an hour, is a flower" might be a tautology in the dreary realm of the crappy poet, but not in the real world. That is the point I have been making. The CTMU is only "tautologous" (and not really, even then) contingent upon the meanings we assign to words. Thus dependent on an indefinitely large semantic network. And contact with the external environment to establish the ultimate meanings of words, unless we are to fall into the same pit as Derrida, and live perpetually trapped by our language.

6,8, 11. The MAP corresponds to what might be called "nomological closure". But, the problem here comes in with the meanings of words - as Asmodeus points out in his point 11. Is God, for example, to be included in "reality"? Well, it depends on our definitions of "God" and "reality", doesn't it? This is undoubtedly theology, and no, theology is not necessarily devoid of content (I never said it is), but once again, the definitions Langan provides are not necessarily and self-evidently true. They are merely assumptions which work.

7. Is logic the "rules of cognition" or "laws of thought"? I don't think so, at least not in the sense of "physical law", anyway. It might be a "law" in the legal sense, a set of prescriptions to which we ought to adhere should we wish to behave rationally, but the vast majority of people spend the vast majority of their lives behaving decidedly irrationally, so I don't think that logic is quite that engrained into reality. Of course, it could be argued that "thinking rationally" is simply "behaving in accordance with the dictates of reality": I daresay Langan might offer this definition up. But, unfortunately, this is once again simply a convenient definition of words, a semantic trick, by no means necessarily true...true by argument, perhaps, but the CTMU doesn't rely on arguments or assumptions, does it?

10. Well, given the definitions of words which have been employed, we find ourselves drawing conclusions like panpsychism and panentheism from the CTMU's principles...but drawing them out of the CTMU's axioms doesn't require as much effort as Langan exerted: they fall out quite simply and naturally, because they are once again "definition-crunching". Langan certainly dresses them up in impressive pomp and splendour, but arriving at them is no real work; this doesn't make the conclusions necessarily wrong, of course. Merely not something magnificent.

12. Yes, I read this in the paper. I don't buy it. Show me a formal, rigorous proof of it, and that the SPSCCL does not fall victim to these "logical syndromes", and you'll have my serious attention. But, of course, a rigorous proof does allow for a possible rigorous disproof. Once again, integrating the Wheeler-DeWitt equation yields a plate of fish and chips.

13. If the CTMU is at the "top of the ladder", then there is real trouble. Because, despite the convenient closure rule to the SPSCCL, a metalanguage will be necessary to avoid the logical syndromes. In the absence of a formal proof to the contrary, of course. But then, we still have another problem, irrespective. Because of the problem with definitions which I highlighted above, there is another choice to make. Either, to keep itself at the apex without need for reference to a higher rung, the CTMU would need to include the "indefinitely large semantic network". But then, language cannot relate to empirical reality, since this would have to happen on the next level up (I know the CTMU says this won't have to happen, but it is a simple fact of model theory that it will). Alternatively, the level at

which this happens will be the highest, but then the theory is no longer exclusively "top-down", and has some tangled meta-loops. So one way or the other, it doesn't work.

14. I have shown how many of the CTMU's axioms rely on assumptions.

15. Here's an "empirical observation" upon which the CTMU relies: reality behaves in a logically consistent fashion. How do we disprove it? One day when my coffee cup is both green and red, and there is no "higher court" of explanation to which we may appeal for the reason why. Which brings us by a commodius vicus of recirculation back to Hume's problem of induction and environs. And Popper's continuation of this discourse, and, dare I say it, the realms of pseudoscience.

16. I agree with the institutionalised hacks bit...I am sure that even Langan cannot have such a loathing for institutionalised hacks as I do: he, after all, was not forced to vomit Afrocentrist postmodern neo-Bolshevik propaganda back at his lecturers in order to get a bachelor's degree. Or study fluid dynamics. No, for most worthwhile things I know, I have only myself to thank. However, I feel it pertinent to point out that the media labelling anyone as anything is not any form of indicator that the epithet is merited or true. And I never said that Quine refuted the CTMU, since he was writing when Langan was still a foetus. But, some of Quine's thoughts do make some very good points, points which can be effectively deployed against the CTMU (like the analytic/synthetic distinction); and Langan could have been aware of this, and taken it into account, simply by reading such heady treatises for his own edification...that's what I did, after all.

17. Asmodeus, you're right about me dogpaddling...because I can't swim. But I have to keep myself afloat somehow, as the sinking ship SS Catmew frantically empties her bilge tanks here on my talk page in a last attempt to avoid hitting the bottom of the ocean. :P

In a sense, perhaps, one might characterise the CTMU as a baroque form of idealism, where the reality-being-the-realm-of-mind is simultaneously defined to be the Godhead. This is a possible by-product of mind and reality being the two sides of the same coin. It does have an advantage over "conventional" idealism in that it does not require the existence of discrete, anthropomorphic souls. Which is bad for Langan if by some bizarre stroke of perversity I am ever proven wrong, since he will have a time of it excising my soul from the fabric of reality to put to his personal use. But, he's still a long way away from having to worry about such things, so no matter. Byrgenwulf 20:31, 24 August 2006 (UTC)

**Response:** Instead of generating the usual torrent of fresh errors, Rumpelstiltskin has evidently chosen to compound some of the errors that he has already made (not that he has made no new errors; it's just that he has done so by elaborating on some of his 28 existing errors). In order:

1. Since the CTMU relies on a combination of deduction and logical induction, its logic can in fact be checked (by someone capable of following it).

2,3: One can take the logical uniformity of nature "for granted" by implication rather than assumption. Again, the implication goes like this: if nature were anywhere illogical, then it would be factually inconsistent, rendering true indistinguishable from false and reality from nonreality, thus precluding coherent perception and cognition within the range of the inconsistency. But that which cannot be coherently perceived or conceived cannot be recognized as reality, and has no place in a theory of reality. So for theoretical purposes, reality exhibits logical homogeneity, and logical induction thus escapes the pitfalls of empirical induction.

4. The CTMU allows for the mental dimension of existence and perception because it is supertautological and therefore subject to complete operational closure. This is true of no other theory.

5. "A rose is that feeling you get when five minutes feels like an hour" is ultimately an impredicative definition and therefore a tautology; the "is" amounts to an equals sign. So as Gertrude Stein might have put it, what we have here is " $A = B$ " --> " $A = A$ " (where  $A =$  "a rose" and  $B =$  "that feeling..."). This may not instantiate a tautology for those who prefer the usual meaning of rose, but it still conforms to tautological syntax under your definition.

6,8,11. Again, the MAP is implied by the analytic closure of reality with respect to definition.

7. The laws of logic can be broken, but only at the expense of validity. Therefore, logic rules valid theoretical cognition.

10. You don't seem to appreciate the CTMU emphasis on definition. That's a problem for any philosopher, but especially for a philosopher who lives in a self-defining universe...i.e., a universe not defined by something external to it, for example, an absent deity. (Incidentally, while various nontrivial implications emerge quite naturally from the CTMU, this does not imply that "no real work" went into the CTMU itself.)

12. A formal, rigorous proof may well exist. But I doubt that you could easily follow it, and in any case, giving it here would violate WP:OR. So for now, it will suffice to note that it is impossible to map Russell's paradox irresolvably into the CTMU. Specifically, whereas the concept of self-inclusion is ambiguous and therefore troublesome in set theory - nobody has ever actually seen a set coherently "include itself" in the usual confused sense of that phrase - it has a more detailed interpretation in the CTMU. Thus, unlike set theory, the CTMU need not rely on mere semantic barriers to protect it from the associated paradoxes.

13. The CTMU is on the top rung of the ladder of metalanguages not because it sits still and blocks anything trying to get past it, but because in climbing past it, any higher metalanguage is forced to either recapitulate its essential structure, or lose all linguistic functionality and fall back to the ontological groundstate. Because the CTMU contains only the fundamental requisites of existence, nothing less can function as the language of reality.

14. You have shown nothing of the kind...not even once.

15. On the day when any point on the surface of your coffee cup is "both green and red" --> "green and not-green" --> " $X$  and not- $X$ " (a paradox), true will equal false and reality will equal nonreality. Logical thought, along with rational operations like proof, disproof, and empirical induction, will on that day depart from you, and as your mind evaporates and wafts forever away, you will no doubt use your very last bit of it to wish that you had something as solid as "pseudoscience" on which to plant your feet. (Of course, that day may already have come for you.)

16. The CTMU explicitly accommodates the Duhem-Quine thesis and its underlying analytic-synthetic entanglements, along with other advanced logical and model-theoretic relationships. So if the work of Quine can be effectively deployed against the CTMU, then it can be effectively deployed against logic and model theory themselves. (By the way, if you understand the pedagogical deficiencies of academically institutionalized hacks, then why are you trying to become one yourself, instead of "going the hard way" and actually working for a living like Langan? Some might discern a measure of hypocrisy in your obvious preference for effete ivory-tower cultism over honest, productive physical labor of measurable benefit to the rest of mankind.)

17. I hate to be the one to break the news to you, but sinking theoretical ships takes more than a broadside of catch-and-release red herring tooting on noisemakers and wearing "Property of Admiral

Quine" stickers on their tails. If you really think that the CTMU has been vanquished by them, then swimmer or not, you need to dogpaddle out the hatch and uncork your periscope (darned seaweed gets in everything).

By the way, Rumpelstiltskin, I'm not referring to your assertions as errors just because I'd like them to be. I'm calling them errors because they display a (usually profound) misunderstanding of either logic, or of the CTMU in particular. You don't necessarily make them all out of sheer stupidity; you make them because you want so very badly for the CTMU to be mistaken, and to prove your imagined intellectual superiority to Chris Langan. Unfortunately, the validity of the CTMU is out of your hands, and Chris Langan is not within range of your intellectual firepower. My sincere and well-meant advice: think before attacking your keyboard. You don't want to make yourself look even worse than you already do. Asmodeus 14:08, 26 August 2006 (UTC)

Asmodeus, "rose = flower" is not a tautology. To see this, consider a real tautology, "unmarried man = bachelor". Now do you see why your example of a tautology is not actually a tautology? Let me explain, while any rose is a flower, it is not the case that any flower is a rose (that's because the set of roses is a proper subset of the set of flowers). So "rose" is not exactly equal to "flower". But any unmarried man is a bachelor, and any bachelor is an unmarried man. No doubt some similar elementary confusion underlies your misuse of the equality operator in statements like "Mind = Reality".

Obviously Asmodeus should listen to and learn from Byrgenwulf rather than always retorting with empty theoretic braggadocio. It's like someone who keeps bragging about a giant fish they caught, but every time you ask to see the fish all you get is another round of grandiose boasting about the fish. Despite being dressed in terms of formal logic, there is no demonstration that the "CTMU" is actually a theory of formal logic. If it were, there would be some way to test it. CaveBat 17:00, 27 August 2006 (UTC)

Let's start at the end - and these numbered points are so tiresome, being a bookkeeping device for an invalid tally anyway. I do not "want so very badly" for the CTMU to be mistaken. It is mistaken, and naive to boot, a labyrinth of smoke and mirrors the kernel of which is not really very complicated. Your "psychological reading" of me, Asmodeus, is grossly flawed (did DrL help with it?), because despite what you might think, you do not know enough about me to accurately ascertain my motives, my capability, or my knowledge. I know that you have been on a few Google expeditions to find out all about me, but only the tiniest fraction of information pertaining to me is available online.

Moreover, you say that "Chris Langan is not within range of [my] intellectual firepower". Why? Because he is allegedly the "smartest man in the world"? That's not an argument! And if Langan were truly the smartest man in the world, he would see that. You see, we have to look at the grounds on which Langan earned this "title". He "breaks" conventional IQ tests (Stanford-Binet, Wechsler, etc.). Great. So do I. So do thousands and thousands of other people. The first time Langan wrote the Mega Test, he scored the minimum 42 correct for admission to the Mega Society. Now I know he came up with some argument about efficiency: "why waste time getting all 49 correct, when 42 will do for your purposes?" I know the feeling: I have often walked out of exams etc. early, not having bothered answering everything, because I know that what I have done will suffice. So if there were 7 really tough questions on the test, then there's no need to break one's head over them, since Hoeflin's questions (yes, I've seen his tests online) are of the sort where one knows whether or not one has answered correctly. When Langan took the test a second time, he scored higher, and it is primarily on this score, and on the wow-gee-whiz factor of his "conventional" IQ scores (since it is questionable whether Hoeflin's tests even measure IQ), that earned Langan this title.

In one of his interviews (I forget which), Langan is tested by a professional psychometrician who pronounces that he has "never seen anything like this" in his career. We are invited to be impressed by this pronouncement. But let's perform a quick Fermi calculation to see what this actually means.

Let's say the chap has been doing his work for 20 years, and works 200 days a year. Let's further imagine that he performs an average of 3 IQ tests a day (since he will no doubt also counsel, consult, administer other psychometric tests, maybe lecture, etc.). Multiply it all together, and we find he has tested about 12 000 people. But what this means is that Langan would sit simply at the 1 in 12 000 level: i.e., his IQ is at least about 165 (if I'm not mistaken - I don't remember all the details offhand, and am not bothered to look them up).

165 is high, but not phenomenal. I have little doubt that Langan's IQ is score higher than this: he is obviously very intelligent, after all. However, it should also be noted that the more IQ tests one does, the higher one's score will become...there is a certain pattern to the questions, and the more familiar one is with the pattern (and don't get me wrong - this does require intelligence) the quicker and more effectively one will answer the tests. But my point is that the grounds for him being declared the "smartest man in the world" are very shaky, indeed. There is, in all likelihood, no one "smartest man in the world". The popular press does have a tendency to over-emphasise superlatives, as we all know: the fastest car, bloodiest war, richest person, etc. There is no objective or scientific accuracy to many of the claims they make.

So, Asmodeus, while it is no doubt very flattering to Langan's ego to have earned this epithet, we have to realise that it is not as well-earned as he may choose to make himself believe. And anyway, scientific and philosophical theories are not judged on the IQs of their creators. They are judged on their merits. And sometimes, even an ignorant child can point out that the emperor has no clothes.

Moving on, I feel that, perhaps, now is the time to point something else out. I have not been "attacking my keyboard" without the requisite degree of thought, as Asmodeus has indicated. This discussion has not required much thought, overall, but nonetheless. What I wish to point out is this. Asmodeus has been gleefully tallying up my so-called "errors". However, I made a deliberate, glaring error which anyone who is familiar with the relevant theory, and on their guard for any oversight, omission, or bluff, as Asmodeus has pedantically proven he is, would not miss. Above, early on in this discussion, I spoke of "...reading down the diagonal of the Goedel numbering...". Now, it is common error among amateur aficionados of Goedel to associate the diagonal lemma with Cantor's proof of the continuity of the real numbers. But in actuality, Goedel used nothing like that system, and even the term "diagonal lemma" was used of his theory after the paper was published, because of its conceptual (not formal) similarity to Cantor's diagonal argument. In other words, that statement was bollocks, but bollocks that a sufficiently alert and informed reader would have picked up on. Curiously, Asmodeus didn't. It has not been added to his triumphal "error count", nor even casually pointed out. Since he was obviously on the lookout for errors, I can only assume that he is not sufficiently familiar with the subject matter to have picked up on my little bait. Of course, it would only be natural for Asmodeus to respond with "well, you've made so many errors, I can't count all of them and still have time to eat breakfast". Unfortunately, this "error" was really just begging to be called, as it was something that would incontrovertibly prove me to be ignorant; it could have settled the matter there and then...so that response just doesn't cut it, I'm afraid.

Now, while the terms in which I made the point were bollocks (specifically the use of the word "diagonal"), the point still holds, of course. I was careful in that regard. This miraculous SPSCCL language is a windmill at which quixotic thinkers have been tilting since the sixteenth century. All Langan has done with the CTMU is write down a series of platitudes about reality, derive some "requirements" from them, and then say that this SPSCCL is a language possessed of these requirements. Smoke and mirrors. Moreover, as I have indicated, the paper is riddled with category mistakes: for example, we are told at one point that "reality is a relation". Then, we are told that "reality is a language", which, of course, contains relations. A category mistake. And more smoke and mirrors. There seems to be a fundamental misunderstanding (or blurring of the lines) between syntax and semantics - and this conceptual smudge carries over to the SPSCCL.

The CTMU is filled with technical terminology. But often, this technical vocabulary is abused, and the manner in which it is deployed indicates a fundamental misunderstanding of the real meanings of the terms. For example, Langan speaks at one point of duality. He writes a little about the duality principle

in projective geometry - the interchanging of vertices and edges - but then goes on to link this with the duality of vector spaces. However, these are two distinct (unrelated) meanings of the word "duality". Somewhat like that postmodernist writing about relativity, who confounded cultural relativity with special relativity. Had Langan been drawing obvious - or profound - mathematical conclusions in that section, the story would be different. But no, the situation arises purely from a very simple error, and ignorance (or disrespect) for the very specific and formal meanings which adhere to mathematical terms.

In short, then, the CTMU is based on two principle methods: the making of straightforward observations, and bluster. Similarly with Asmodeus' statements here. He has shown in his responses above that he spectacularly misunderstands many of the points I am making. For example, he still has not answered my concerns in points 2 & 3, about the uniformity of nature, without use of a circular argument; nor has any new information been added since the point was first raised. He just keeps on defining "uniformity of nature" with the use of the negation of the problem of induction. This does not, under any circumstances, constitute a valid or insightful argument.

Similarly with the "rose", "flower", "that feeling..." point 5. All Asmodeus did was make my point again for me, except that he seemed to think that what he wrote is different to what I wrote, and points out my "error". No, Asmodeus. My point is this. We once again have to draw the line between syntax and semantics. A statement like  $(A = A)$  is a syntactic tautology: the logical form of the statement renders it true. "A rose is a flower" is a semantic tautology, an analytically true statement, which is only true by virtue of the definitions of the words. Thinking about it, it is not even a tautology. Because "A flower is a rose" is not a tautology. And yet Asmodeus - model theory, propositional logic, and SPSCCL virtuoso - has failed to raise this.

I very much do understand just how much the CTMU relies on definitions of words, Asmodeus. That's part of my problem with it. The CTMU can theoretically hold only so long as words have the definitions they do. But this detracts immensely from the "absolute" nature Langan claims for the theory. An argument has to be provided as to why Langan's definition of "reality" is the right one. Which means that it is not a necessary and self-evident truth. It is an assumption, the plausibility of which is established through rational argument.

It is also a sweeping generalisation to classify every academic as an "effete institutionalised hack". Just as invalid as claiming that no-one outside a university can have an intellectual life. There are many hacks with professorial tenure at the moment; many people who do not deserve the position, and whose thinking is so trapped in the ruts stamped out by the herd that the amount of new knowledge they may generate is virtually nothing. But by far the most productive generators of knowledge, insight and wisdom in this world are academics as well. Contrary to popular opinion, it is real work; just, perhaps, more pleasurable and satisfying than many other jobs, since one who is given to thought and theorising will do so anyway, and being paid for it is an added bonus.

I would encourage you, Asmodeus, to get off your high horse. There is no reason for you to claim an epistemological or intellectual position of superiority here. On the contrary. It is not for you to comment on my ability; not until you have proven your own beyond a shadow of a doubt: which is far from the situation here. It is an effective tactic to attack instead of defend, as is well known. And equally, it is effective to obscure what is actually going on with smoke and mirrors, and torrents of bluster. After all, it is largely thanks to the latter that the CTMU has been seriously considered by anyone at all. But Asmodeus, you can stop doing it here, since it simply does not work on me. Or anyone else with a modicum of understanding. And I shall see to it that no-one else here on Wikipedia is taken in or manipulated by it either. Your high level of intelligence may allow you to take many people in with this sort of conduct, including, perhaps, yourself. But it is not infallible, and sooner or later one really does have to ditch the fallacies in favour of the facts, which in the present circumstances are not on your side. Byrgenwulf 17:44, 27 August 2006 (UTC)

I hadn't noticed Cavebat's response...where he raises the same point as I did about roses, flowers, and tautologies. And bluster. Thank you, CaveBat. It is reassuring to know that it is not me who is

deluded here. Byrgenwulf 17:48, 27 August 2006 (UTC)

## Response:

29. But Rumpelstiltskin, you and CaveBat *are* deluded. There are several kinds, and several associated definitions, of tautology, and we've been discussing at least two of them here. One, often specifically referred to as a logical or propositional tautology, is an always-true relationship of sentential variables in propositional logic. All of the other kinds of tautology - including impredicative, circular, or redundant usages of language, e.g., analytic statements which are true by virtue of definition alone - are related to logical tautology in a certain way. This relationship is exactly as I have described it; logical tautologies are perfectly general and stand a priori, whereas less general analytic statements, which relate to logical tautologies as to syntax, are not and do not. (I suggest that CaveBat let Rumpelstiltskin sink or swim on his own here - I'd rather not have to start a parallel error count for CaveBat.)

30. I don't claim to know anything factual about you. I only know what you claim about yourself. In fact, I have my doubts regarding your claims; for example, you seem to resemble certain other personae associated with a quasi-legendary "uber-troll" about which I was once earnestly warned. But that's another issue entirely.

31. You're mistaken about the number of items on the Mega Test, the "ceiling" of which Langan seems to have broken twice (once each for two contradictory normings - as I seem to recall, Langan has publicly disowned the Mega Test and its weirdly-vacillating statistics). Incidentally, that Langan can break standard (i.e., real) IQ tests is a matter of public record; that you do, on the other hand, is not. If I were you, I'd have myself professionally tested before leaping to such an improbable conclusion. After all, if you could break the ceilings of standard IQ tests, then your IQ would be over four sigma above the mean, i.e., 1 in at least 30,000. It's not that I think you lack any intelligence at all; it's just that since you're so critical of Langan, I know that you wouldn't want to be guilty of overrating your own IQ.

32. When a veteran neuropsychologist tests a subject and says that he has "never seen anything like it", this wording may not mean that the subject has merely scored at the top of the observed range. Such wording may instead mean that the subject is markedly dissimilar to other test subjects, e.g., because the test ceiling was broken in an especially decisive way. You have allowed for only the first possibility, and that's an error.

33. I have just demonstrated that you have indeed been attacking your keyboard without the requisite amount of thought. Either that, or you have been making errors deliberately, which is hardly a brilliant debate strategy.

34. You state that while Langan's media billing is no doubt very flattering to his ego, it is not well-earned. Actually, I believe that Langan has said that he prefers to stand on his intellectual productions rather than on test scores. You claim that his intellectual productions are trivial and hollow, and thus that he has earned very little credit indeed. However, as we have already seen, you are not qualified to make such a judgment. Making authoritative judgments for which one is plainly underqualified is an error. (By the way, I can't help but notice your use of the phrase "the emperor has no clothes" - gee, I wonder where I've heard that before! Beware the company you keep.)

35. You assert that I erred in not making note of your use of Cantorian terminology in reference to the work of Godel. In fact, Godel is often explicitly said by mathematicians to have employed diagonalization techniques. "Diagonalization" has come to denote an entire class of mathematical

methods of which Cantorian diagonalization is merely one example. Congratulations - in order to catch me in a supposed error, you have gone to the absurd length of admitting an error which you actually never made. Now, that's an error and a half! (By the way, it did strike me that you'd gotten your wires crossed regarding the diagonalization methods of Godel and Cantor. But this is the sort of befuddlement I've come expect from you, and properly explaining that particular error would have taken too much time away from your many others. So rather than uncovering what looked like a rat's nest of technical confusion, I moved on. Even if you planted this "mistake" in the full knowledge that Godel employed diagonalization, you've still erred by trying to blame your opponent for ignoring the bait.)

36. You assert that the above error (35) was begging for notice, inasmuch it would have incontrovertibly proven your ignorance and thus settled the matter once and for all. But if calling you on obvious errors were enough to settle this matter, it would clearly have been settled a long time ago.

37. You state that SPSCL is a windmill at which quixotic thinkers have been tilting since the sixteenth century. That's incorrect; in fact, nothing like SCSPL was described anywhere near the sixteenth century. The most advanced conceptualizations of logic and language were still far too primitive.

38. You say that the PCID paper is riddled with category mistakes because it states both that "reality is a relation" and that "reality is a language" which contains relations. But this is not a "category mistake", because (1) language is indeed relational in multiple senses, and (2) the term "relation" is not defined in terms of level or category. In fact, as almost everybody but you seems to be well aware, there exist relations of relations of ...(keep on going)... of relations. That's why logicians distinguish orders of relation.

39. You say that the interchanging of vertices and edges in projective geometry (and graph theory, etc.) is unrelated to vector space duality. This is an error of which only a mathematical ignoramus could be guilty. To see this, consider that in category theory, regarded by many as the most general field of mathematics, morphisms are represented by arrows, i.e., directed line segments resembling edges, while objects, i.e. the points connected by the arrows, are thus represented by vertices. This is not an accident of notation; vertices and edges correspond to unary and binary relations or mappings respectively. That this general relationship leads to different forms of duality in different mathematical contexts - for example, that the dual space  $V^*$  of scalar mappings is as much a vector space as  $V$  itself, which contains the vectors thereby mapped - is obvious, and it is just as obvious that Langan was referring to this ubiquitous mathematical relationship.

40. Apropos of the distinction between semantic and syntactic tautology (see 29 above), you state in so many words that the CTMU is mere semantics. But in fact, the CTMU is a theory of the entailments and implications of syntax. This syntax, including logic, arithmetic, and other fundamental components, is defined to consist only of distributive (absolute) ingredients of reality. This is exactly the basis of SCSPL, and exactly why the CTMU constitutes necessary truth.

41. You state that I have not addressed your points regarding the uniformity of nature without using circular argumentation, and have thus failed to bring any new information to the controversy, merely defining "uniformity of nature" by negation on the problem of induction. But I have not "negated" the problem of induction. In fact, I have observed that the problem speaks to the unavoidability of circular argumentation in induction, and that the best way to deal with this problem is to base the circularity on a priori syntax - in particular, logical tautology - rather than a posteriori observations and semantic word games.

42. Being paid to think and theorize is not just a "bonus" for the vast majority of academics; it



accounts for the bulk of their motivation. An intelligent person who merely wishes to think and theorize for the joy of it can easily do so, and equip his or her mind for that purpose, without paying many years and tens of thousands of dollars to the university system for the privilege of kissing the asses of the institutionalized hacks who pull almost all of its strings.

43. You say that I have "no reason ... to claim an epistemological or intellectual position of superiority here." On the contrary, you have thus far given me at least 43 such reasons...well, 44. To wit:

44. In the present circumstances, all of the facts are inarguably on my side. (And thanks!)

That's sixteen (16) more errors, a new one-day record which brings your total error count to a high-caliber 44. Since you seem to be on a roll, would you like to try for an even 50? Asmodeus 23:22, 27 August 2006 (UTC)

Back to the numbering, are we? Very well, then...I am not going to address all of them, lest once again we get dragged into a pantomime, so I shall attempt to confine myself to the more "important" points.

29. Asmodeus, I am glad to see that you finally distinguish between different uses of the word "tautology". Only, it is my contention that the "tautologies" applied in the CTMU are of the weaker kind: they are not "perfectly general and a priori" true, as a logical, syntactic tautology (life is life) is. Which means, if they are not a priori true, then they are not inviolate, as Langan claims.

30. Since you bring it up, I am curious now...who is this "über-troll" of whom you speak? Grendel?

31. Asmodeus, 1 in 30 000 people simply means 1 of about 200 000 people on this planet (taking 6E9 people altogether). And yes, I have been professionally tested a number of times in my life, and know I am above the 4 s.d. level. I just don't attribute particular weight to IQ, that's all, and that's why I have not seen the need to blow my own trumpet and join all kinds of clubs and societies, rather preferring to get on with life.

34. In what way am I not "qualified" to make a judgment on Langan's theory? I am perfectly "qualified" to do so. Are you telling me that there's this guy with a high IQ but no qualification, who is entitled to come up with theories and demand serious recognition for them, but that the only people who can criticise his theories are tenured professors and/or those who have met with the explicit approval of his avatar Asmodeus? It doesn't work like that, I'm afraid.

35. Bollocks: I did not just refer to diagonalisation, I explicitly referred to "reading down a diagonal".

37. No, sixteenth century thinkers were not looking for something specifically called "SPSCL". But since that time, and even possibly before, thinkers have been trying to artificially construct a "perfect language" in which reality can be completely and perfectly expressed. The SPSCL claims to be such a language. And it is just as quixotic and naive as the attempts of those earlier thinkers.

38. This still doesn't address Langan's mistake. Because while language undoubtedly contains relations, yes, and there are various "orders" of relations, indeed, it is nonetheless incorrect to insist that something can be both a relation and a language at the same time. It's a bit like saying that something is both a wheel and a car. It doesn't work.

39. Now you're really parading your ignorance. You see, finding the dual of a graph involves swapping faces and vertices around. But, the dual of a vector space is still a vector space (not a vector). So, if we were to symbolically represent functions for finding duals of graphs, we might say  $D1:F \rightarrow V$  and  $D2:V \rightarrow F$ . We have two groups of objects, and the "dual functions" map objects from one group into the other group. But, with vector spaces, the "dual functions"  $D1:W \rightarrow W$  (where  $W$  is a vector space) and  $D2:V \rightarrow V$  (where  $V$  is a vector) map objects from one group into other objects from the same group. The functions (morphisms) are not, cannot be, the same, and thus there is no single category

theoretic conception of duality which covers both areas. I did not say that projective geometry and vector spaces are completely unrelated (of course not: one fascinating point of intersection is matroids). I said that the notion of duality is not the same. And I am right. Ask any competent mathematician. Also, vertices and edges do not correspond to "unary and binary relations" respectively. That's nonsense. I can assure you that I do not need lectures in category theory from you. Especially since anyone taking information from you is bound to come away confused and misinformed.

40. No, that's what Langan says the CTMU is. But that is not the actual state of affairs. A statement like "Mind=Reality" is not true by virtue of syntax. It is true by virtue of the meanings Langan gives the words "mind" and "reality". It is a semantic tautology which holds under certain definitions. Thus the CTMU does not constitute necessary truth. Perhaps I ought to point out here that just because Langan says something, does not mean it is true. It seems that some people, possibly Langan himself, do not understand this.

41. Maybe you don't understand the meanings of the terminology used here. The problem of induction refers to the fact that we cannot know with certainty whether or not the conclusions of inductive inferences will be true (because we have to tacitly assume a "uniformity of nature principle"); it is a "problem" because if our conclusions to otherwise rational thought processes are not true, then sometimes our reason is less than 100% "accurate and coherent". Your solution is simply to say that "if nature were not uniform, then our thoughts could not possibly be coherent; therefore, nature is uniform". It turns the problem into its own solution. That is circular and invalid. No matter how many so-called "tautologies" go into making it up.

43, 44. If you truly believe that, Asmodeus, after all that has transpired, then I pity you.

94.23452345 Something just struck me...the notion of "conspansive duality" is defined using the "Venn-diagram like" structures formed when looking down light cones on Minkowski diagrams, orthogonally to the world line at that particular point. Only, why, Asmodeus, do we use Minkowski spacetime and not Galilean? Because of relativity, yes? Special relativity. But SR is based on two principles: the equivalence of observers, and the "law of light". Now, the equivalence of observers is a good, sound philosophical notion (but not "tautological"). But the "law of light" is based entirely on empirical considerations: the measurements conducted in Michelson-Morley type experiments, etc. Without this empirical observation, we should be using Galilean spacetime, not Minkowski. Light cones would have no meaning. Yes, we could introduce some other theoretical limit to the speed of transmission of information to resurrect light-cone like structures, but we have no (tautological!) a priori reason for doing so (and Langan doesn't even try giving one in his paper, since he's apparently ignorant of this problem). So conspansive duality, a vital component of the CTMU, actually relies on an empirical, scientific observation! So much for "supertautology"... Byrgenwulf 08:13, 28 August 2006 (UTC)

97.4586758 I went back to the CTMU paper just to check on this last point. In fact, Langan, does introduce an excuse as to why we have light-cone structures, so that we don't have to rely on the empirical derivation of SR...we are told that "Conspansion is a global process which cannot be locally differentiated as to rate. Its rate is thus a globally invariant "time-space conversion factor", and because all changes of local state must be expressed in terms of it, it is maximal. This invariant maximal rate of production is referred to as the rate of conspansion  $c$  and can be physically identified with the speed of light in vacuo". We are not given a proof as to why "conspansion cannot be locally differentiated as to rate", of course, but simply asked to accept this (rather circular statement, since the reason for the global/local dichotomy in the first place relies on the result). Also, it does not mathematically follow that "because because all changes of local state must be expressed in terms of it, it is maximal"...that is "let's pretend" maths. There is no logical reason why it should take any value at all. I can express the entirety of physical laws in terms of the golden ratio, for example, but this does not imply anything about the golden ratio itself. Isn't it also just so convenient that we can identify the "rate of conspansion" with the speed of light? Whyever would we want to do that? There is no reason to assume that the two are the same thing...just because the speed of light is an observed maximum.

The whole argument is more circular than a circus ring. Byrgenwulf 12:23, 28 August 2006 (UTC)

101.54645654 Reading this paper again is like another can of worms. Asmodeus said above that "nobody has ever actually seen a set coherently "include itself" in the usual confused sense of that phrase - it has a more detailed interpretation in the CTMU". Funny, that, considering that Langan defines the SPSCl's global processor  $\Gamma$  to contain a set  $O$  of "active reflexive objects", which in turn contains  $\Gamma$ . A big deal is made of this fact, but in no way is any provision made which circumvents the usual problems of self-inclusion. We are simply told, and asked to believe, that it is not a problem in the SPSCl because the SPSCl is an übermetalanguage which does not suffer from the mere logical afflictions which plague other, similar languages, blather-blather-blather... Byrgenwulf 12:57, 28 August 2006 (UTC)

Asmodeus, can you please explain exactly how your example of a tautology "rose = flower" (so by the commutativity of equality "flower = rose") is a tautology given that not all flowers are roses? Are you saying in your last response to me that your example is tautological a priori even with the given empirical referents? CaveBat 18:23, 28 August 2006 (UTC)

That which we call an error would by any other name. . . . Anville 18:26, 28 August 2006 (UTC)

**Response to CaveBat:** Ah, but there was a *substitution* involved...the replacement of a general symbol with a more specific symbol. We started out with "a rose is a flower":  $A = B$ . (Forget about Rumpelstiltskin's alternative definition "a rose is that feeling you get when five minutes feels like an hour"; it's beside the point.) Then we substituted "rose" for "flower" within the scope of the "=" sign, giving us  $A = A$ , i.e., "a rose is a rose"; that's what the Gertrude Stein allusion was about. "A rose is a rose" is an unequivocal tautology, and there is nothing further to squeak about. (Your question hardly merited an answer, but I didn't want to leave you hanging. ;-) Asmodeus 21:02, 28 August 2006 (UTC)

Asmodeus, you're painting yourself into a corner again. "A rose is a flower" is not a tautology. Because the "is" in that sentence does not analytically translate into an equals sign. It translates into subset: "roses form a subset of the set of flowers". That really is a frightfully elementary mistake, Asmodeus, and attempting to obscure it with blather doesn't help any. Language can be tricky, for some, I know, but really...funny, though, that in many cases the CTMU makes similar mistakes. Byrgenwulf 21:42, 28 August 2006 (UTC)

**Response:** It just gets better and better with you, doesn't it? Read carefully. "A rose is a flower" is definitely a tautological statement. How can you tell? Because "rose" is the subject, and "is a flower" contains only information that is already implicit in "rose". This is called redundancy, and it makes the statement a tautology...as much a tautology as "a rose is a rose" (because these two statements contain exactly the same amount of information regarding the subject, and this amount of information is already implicit in the subject alone). Not a propositional tautology, mind you, but a tautology nonetheless. (If you don't believe me, try a good online dictionary. I recommend OneLook.)

Now, say that we change the above statement to "the flower is a rose." The subject is now the noun phrase the flower, and the predicate is a rose tells us what kind of flower we are dealing with. Because the predicate carries information not present in the subject alone, it is not as tautological as the first statement. However, it may surprise you to learn that although it is less tautological than the first statement, a case can still be made that it is "somewhat tautological", because it tells us that the flower is a specific kind of flower, when we already knew that the flower must be some specific kind of flower by definition. That is, since rose implies flower, it carries a combination of new and redundant information when attributed to "the flower". So you see, this strange, oversimplistic idea that you can always draw a sharp line between tautological and nontautological statements does not hold true in the real world. It might help occasion a chorus-line hot dog dance with your knucklehead buddies

from the Unofficial Anti-Pseudoscience Executive here at Wikipedia, where everybody's an expert who really really wants to be, but it won't fly with anyone who actually knows what he's talking about. (Your error count is now 45, and when I get around to your last string of howlers, it will of course go even higher.) Asmodeus 00:57, 29 August 2006 (UTC)

Asmodeus, please mind your civility. Witty, subtle digs are one thing, but "knucklehead" really just is too straightforward, don't you think?

Anyway, you're still wrong. Here's why. You are saying that "a rose is a flower" is a tautology as a figure of speech. I prefer the term "reduncancy" for that concept. But even then, it is not completely redundant, since the information contained in the predicate is less than the information contained in the subject.

We could say "a rose is a flower with x and y characteristics". This follows the old Aristotelian conception of a definition as containing a genus and differentia. That way, we could interchange the subject and object ("a flower with x and y characteristics is a rose") and still have a true statement. You have had to "cheat", you see, in what you wrote above, by swapping an indefinite article with the definite article, in order to get "the flower is a rose" to be true. And "the flower is a rose" is not in any way a tautology...that is complete nonsense. There are no "degrees of tautology": it is an attribute which a proposition either does or does not have.

All of that aside, it most certainly is not the case that "a rose is a flower" is necessarily true. As we have seen, I can propose an alternative definition for "rose", which would render the statement false in certain circumstances. This is my point about the CTMU. Even if principles such as "Mind=Reality" are semantic tautologies, it does not make the theory necessarily true. Only a logical or syntactic tautology can do that, Asmodeus. Two distinct meanings of the word "tautology" (which as I say is why I prefer "redundancy" for the figure of speech). And the statement "Mind=Reality" is not necessarily true, in the sense that {P or not-P} is. It is only true as long as a rose is a flower. Which just does not cut it.

Finally, you see fit to tell me that in a tautology, the maximum amount of information is already encoded in the subject. Great: this is a point I made way back at the beginning of this discussion, on the CTMU's talk page, even, if I recall. Thus, if that is to hold, are we to then accept that the CTMU contains no more information than that encoded in its three "tautological axioms"? Byrgenwulf 06:45, 29 August 2006 (UTC)

**Response:** You're talking with your mouth full. In case you don't know what I mean, consider the following exemplary dialogue.

**Adult:** "Junior, I've caught you with your hand in the cookie jar for the last time. You've been naughty and you're going to be punished."

**Junior:** "Wait a minute (crunch!). Why is it a 'cookie jar'? Why not a 'pickled herring jar' (munch, crumble)? The jar could hold anything. It is a 'cookie jar' only because you have defined it as such. Your accusation is based solely on a choice of definitions. It is a semantic ruse! (gulp, smack!) And please mind your civility!"

The sentence "A flower is a rose" is either simply false (inasmuch as a flower can be of any kind whatsoever), or it is redefinition of flower which ignores any previous definition. In the latter event, we begin with the undefined term flower and then define it by synonymy with (the so far empty term) rose. Since flower is initially undefined, we are merely equating two empty terms without increasing the information content of the definiendum. Due to the form of the statement, it is a semantic tautology, information-free and meaningless. To enable the addition of any information at all, we must assign informational content to rose and use the definite article "the" to identify the specific subject to which this information is being attributed. This is why the definite article the had to be

added to the second statement, and it in no way impairs the conclusions drawn on that basis.

Similarly, "A rose is a flower" is true by definition. Were you to redefine "rose" - e.g., "A rose is X" - then the above reasoning would apply; either your definition is information free, or it contains information permitting its misapplication and subsequent falsification. In the former case, we clearly have an empty tautology...a mere synonymy of empty terms. And in the latter case, we still have a tautology, because in looking at any particular rose, we know immediately that it is an X *because you have previously defined it as such*. In recognizing it as a rose, we have automatically recognized it as an X; X is already built into our recognition routine, where it has been implanted in the form of the definition "A rose is X".

Until you can handle this sort of reasoning, you don't stand a snowball's chance in hell of understanding the first thing about the CTMU. So why bother arguing about it? Be a good student, take a few more elementary logic classes, listen very closely to everything that the hacks say to you, and then come back with a degree and another debate challenge for Langan. That way, Langan may at least be able to rationalize the ensuing waste of time as an opportunity to squash a real card-carrying "acadummy" (as he has been wont to label snooty professional academics). Asmodeus 15:30, 29 August 2006 (UTC)

No, Asmodeus, I can handle this sort of reasoning, I just refuse to pretend that it is valid reasoning, that's all. I know the CTMU's based on it, of course. That's why the CTMU is so grossly flawed.

You see, you have now outlined two options: either a statement is devoid of information, in which case you say it is tautological. Alternatively, a statement which predicates one variable of another using the verbal relation "is", which you insist must be analytically translated as "=", and has the potential to be falsified, you say is also a tautology. That's bollocks. A tautology cannot be falsified, Asmodeus. That's the point of it. I cannot falsify {P or not-P} without evaporating my sanity.

You are completely and utterly wrong, and are just digging a deeper pit for yourself by not backing down and admitting it. While certainly there is another, almost unrelated usage of the word "tautology", as a figure of speech indicating redundancy, if the CTMU is only based on this idea of tautology then it is not "necessarily and absolutely true", because it relies on definitions of words (which are subject to argument and change).

Furthermore, words can be very tricky, Asmodeus...you don't seem to realise the slipperiness and subtlety with which we English speakers use the verb "to be". The sentence "a rose is a flower" can actually be interpreted a number of ways. One possible way is to ignore articles, as you seem to have been doing, and interpret it as the equating of two sentential variables: ("a rose" = "a flower"). This is not only not a tautology, but it is incorrect, as well. Because the two words have different meanings. Or, we can interpret as "a rose is a type of flower", in which case what I said about subsets above applies. But there is no way that if (rose = A) and (flower = B) that the sentence can be translated as (A=B) and still be tautologically true given the standard meanings of the words involved (or any other specified meaning, unless the exact same meaning is given to both words).

The only way in which "a rose is a flower" can be truthfully rendered as a semantic tautology is if we say "the set of roses forms a subset of the set of flowers", because it is not a complete definition: it contains the genus only, with no differentia. That latter sentence (with the sets/subset wording), can be said to be analytically identical with a possible interpretation of our example sentence, and it is tautologically true. You see, because "X", in "a rose is X", is not actually "a flower" but "a species of flower", the bold bit being implicit (understood) in everyday speech. But you cannot seemingly acknowledge this.

We could also introduce a differentia to the statement, as I explained above, to read "a rose is a flower with x characteristics"...that statement is tautologically true, just like "a bachelor is an unmarried male",

where "male" is the genus and unmarried the differentia. A quick test, which you might find helps, Asmodeus, is to see whether in any given sentence one can replace all instances of one word or phrase with the other and still have the same semantic meaning. Wherever I read "bachelor", I can drop in "unmarried male" and achieve the same net denotative effect (although connotations differ - even more so, as we shall see, in the case of the rose, which is positively laden with connotations in English literature). But I can never substitute "rose" with "flower" in a sentence and have an identical semantic message. Never.

I actually cannot believe that I have to explain this elementary analysis to someone as allegedly intelligent as yourself. It's pathetic. Maybe you should fork out some of your hard-earned money and take some night classes in philosophy and logic, since while you clearly seem to think you understand these things, you are making it transparently clear that you do not (I, on the other hand, have a degree, which included three years of formal logic: not that that is even necessary when correcting an error this elementary). Being able to deploy polysyllables as the correct part of speech in vaguely the right context does not equate with legitimately know what they mean. But Asmodeus and/or Langan seems to think that by using lots of them, they add legitimacy to what he writes. This does not work.

Asmodeus, I strongly suggest you think carefully about how you are embarrassing yourself here, and act accordingly. I know it is difficult for some to concede a point without losing face, but I can assure you that things will only get worse if you continue pressing this. You are just plain wrong. Interesting, also, that you said above that semantic tautologies are "information-free and meaningless", when it is, of course, on alleged semantic tautologies that the CTMU is based - not that a statement like "Mind=Reality" is even a true semantic tautology, of course, but anyway... Byrgenwulf 16:15, 29 August 2006 (UTC)

**Response:** Good grief - you really don't get it at all, do you? No statement which is syntactically well-formed can be falsified in and of itself. In order for a well-formed statement to be falsified, it must convey information, and to do that, it must be interpreted. The interpretation can then be falsified. That's why we introduced the definite article to which you objected so strongly; it implies the interpretation of the subject in a specific referent, and it is this interpretation that is liable to falsification. Given your evident inability to distinguish between syntax and interpretation, nothing you've said here makes any sense at all!

As far as concerns the meaning of "is", are you sure you're not related to Bill Clinton? Your personal confusion about the term "is", which is indeed used to describe both attributive and identity relationships, counts for nothing here. The plain fact is, you don't understand what a tautology is, you don't understand the distinction between syntax and semantics, and you're blustering for the sake of diversion. It's not fooling anyone whose opinion counts for anything; anyone who is fooled by it is just as unqualified as you are.

Wow...talk about "embarrassing"! I'm surprised you can even show your face at the front of a classroom (if that's actually what you do). Asmodeus 16:47, 29 August 2006 (UTC)

Are personal attacks and rudeness a common debating technique amongst CTMU proponents? Jeffire 16:53, 29 August 2006 (UTC)

I see that the karma police have arrived. Just to clarify: first Rumpelstiltskin said that I was embarrassing myself. Then I pointed out that Rumpelstiltskin is the one who should be embarrassed. If I was uncivil, then Rumpelstiltskin was uncivil. Please be more evenhanded in your judgments - it's not nice to disruptively game the system. Asmodeus 16:59, 29 August 2006 (UTC)

Because two wrong make a right... Jeffire 17:01, 29 August 2006 (UTC)

Asmodeus, cool it. I didn't even bother addressing sentences of the form "a/the flower is a rose" in my

previous comment, so what you said about definite articles is irrelevant. I spoke exclusively about sentences like "a rose is a flower"...however, since you bring it up again, let me address it.

I never said that a sentence can be falsified "in itself"...when did I say that? But, some sentences have the potential to be falsified, while others do not. For example, "I am drinking coffee" may be falsified, but "either I am drinking coffee or I am not" is always true: a tautology.

"The flower is a rose" has the potential to be falsified, yes. Thus it is not a tautology. Even when said of some specific flower which is, in fact, a rose, the sentence is not "tautological". The sentence itself, both syntactically and semantically, is not tautological, because a tautology is true irrespective of the interpretation of its constituent terms: get yourself a first year logic textbook and look it up. So the blab about definite articles is irrelevant, a red herring.

All semantics is, in this context, is the web of relations between the various logical constants we call "words". What this means is that sentences that are not syntactically tautological (like  $\{P \text{ or not-}R\}$ ) have the potential to be tautological, if our semantic web tells us that  $\{P=R\}$ . But it is not the case that "a rose is a flower" falls into even this category, since  $d(\text{rose}) \neq d(\text{flower})$ , where  $d(x)$  is a function which returns the semantic denotation of a word (let's try to be as pretentious as the CTMU, shall we, and decorate our text with superfluous mathematical terminology).

Unless, you wish for the CTMU's "supertautology" to be not a logical tautology but the figure of speech, i.e. reduncancy. It is super-redundant, I'll grant you that, in that it manages to say exactly the same identical thing in a myriad of various ways without actually saying a lot of thing at all. But that doesn't make it a "necessary, absolute Truth", it just makes it tiresome.

The little bit about "not fooling anyone whose opinion counts for anything" is a textbook example of the "no true Scotsman" argumentative fallacy. And what is your obsession with my qualifications? Let us not forget that at the end of the day I am more qualified than Langan.

And there is no bluster in what I wrote: only the facts of this discussion. Nothing I wrote betrays a misunderstanding of the various terms...on the contrary, I was highlighting your own misconceptions, which are clearly so deeply rooted that you cannot see where you are wrong. But I can assure you that anyone vaguely proficient in this topic will agree with me on this...this flower/rose thing is so unbelievably simple it is absurd that we are having this discussion.

I think you have bankrupted yourself, Asmodeus, and that is why you are resorting to incivility again - and I wasn't the one who started it: first you obliquely referred to the members of Wikiproject:Pseudoscience as knuckleheads and apes, then you came up with a metaphor about me being a child with his hands in the cookie-jar, and then you polished your little rant off with an attack on my qualifications. Only then did I say that you were embarrassing yourself - which is not really uncivil, but more an attempt to try to get you to see reason. Byrgenwulf 17:40, 29 August 2006 (UTC)

Asmodaus, you've said above that "A rose is a flower" translates to "rose = flower". Then you say that if we reduce that alleged tautology to empty terms "we clearly have an empty tautology...a mere synonymy of empty terms". Reducing your example to such a synonymy of empty terms yields:  $x = y$ . So you're saying  $x = y$  is a tautology. But neither  $x = y$  nor the accurate translation  $x \in Y$  (where 'e' denotes set membership) and thus the predicate term  $Yx$  are tautologies because there are semantic substitutions that can make them false. That's one thing Byrgenwulf has been trying to explain to you. Real logical tautologies, like for example  $(p \rightarrow (q \rightarrow p))$ , remain true under any substitution. I think your error in assuming that  $x = y$  is a tautologous synonymy of empty terms explains your belief in statements like "Mind=Reality". CaveBat 17:51, 29 August 2006 (UTC)

**Response to Rumpelstiltskin:** If definite articles are irrelevant, then why did you complain about the one which appeared in "the flower is a rose"?

Clearly *the* had some sort of impact, or you wouldn't have objected to it (as we've already seen, it

signals a very relevant operation, namely, interpretation.) On the other hand, if it was relevant then but is irrelevant now, then your present comments are diversionary, serving only to steer the discussion as far as possible from its original course. Now, why would I be interested in allowing you to do that?

You go on: "The sentence itself, both syntactically and semantically, is not tautological, because a tautology is true irrespective of the interpretation of its constituent terms."

Only propositional tautologies are "true irrespective of the interpretation of their constituent terms." That is, their object-level interpretation conveys no information. This is precisely why propositional tautologies are perfectly general, which is why they relate to arbitrary well-formed expressions as syntactic generalizations...i.e., as syntax.

On the other hand, if a statement is capable of conveying information, then some of its possible interpretations must be falsifiable. Yet, even though I gave you a link to a good online dictionary site, you still maintain that a falsifiable statement - a statement which has the potential to convey information under some valid interpretation - cannot possibly be tautological. That's incorrect. It can be tautological to the precise extent that it is redundant, nevertheless conveying some additional amount of information in the bargain. That's because redundant and nonredundant information can appear in one and the same expression, and in real life, almost always do.

Logical tautologies distribute over well-formed expressions in the same way that the syntax of a language distributes over the expressions of that language: independently of meaning. The truth predicate can be attributed to an expression containing elementary logic functors or their various semantic derivatives only because tautologies define the relationship between elementary logic functors and the truth predicate itself. Where this relationship does not hold, semantic and/or syntactic truth is quite out of the question.

In other words, you still don't appear to understand the proper relationship between syntactic and semantic tautology, which reflects your evident reluctance to use an English dictionary. Unfortunately, your inability to distinguish and properly relate different kinds of linguistic circularity is in the present context a dialectical brick wall. Until you show some glimmering of understanding regarding these distinctions and relationships, discussing the CTMU with you is nothing but a waste of my time. At this point, all you're doing is rambling for the entertainment of you and your peanut gallery.

I don't have any more time to waste on your low-grade nonsense. I'm doing you a favor by debating you at all, and the bottom line is still just this: you have now made at least 45 distinct errors on which I have bothered to specifically call you. Wait...46. To wit:

46. "Let us not forget that at the end of the day I am more qualified than Langan."

Why, *sure* you are! ;-) Asmodeus 19:26, 29 August 2006 (UTC)

Asmodeus, you seem to forget that a number of times I have explicitly addressed the other meaning of "tautology", as a figure of speech which denotes redundancy in a sentence. Only, the use of that figure of speech is not really an impressive feat.

But let me recap quickly. The CTMU is claimed to be based on tautologies. As Asmodeus points out, dictionaries give two main meanings for the word "tautology". So, either the CTMU can be based on propositional tautologies, or on tautologies-as-figures-of-speech, i.e. redundancy. We have seen that the so-called tautological principles of the CTMU are not tautological in the logical sense, as they are



not statements that are true regardless of the interpretation of their terms.

This means they might still be tautologies in the other sense, the figure of speech sense. But they're not. This other meaning of the word "tautology" indicates things like "he drove a huge, big car". But principles like "Mind=Reality" are not based on this other, rhetorical definition of the word tautology, either. And even if they were, these sorts of tautology do not guarantee necessary truth: he could have been driving a little, tiny car. Only a logical tautology can guarantee necessary truth. Therefore, the CTMU has no claim to being based on necessary truths. Therefore, given Langan's obvious confusion about the definitions of many, many terms, it is complete bollocks.

But just to appease you, here's a dictionary definition of "tautologous" (this dictionary defines "tautology" as the noun form of the word "tautologous", so the real information is to be found there). Also, Merriam-Webster is at least a vaguely trustworthy dictionary (while still not quite the Oxford). We are given two meanings, which I duplicate here verbatim (including links):

Involving or containing rhetorical tautology: REDUNDANT

True by virtue of its logical form alone.

where the definition of a rhetorical tautology, is, of course:

1. a: needless repetition of an idea, statement, or word.

So, we can already rule out number two: "a rose is a flower" is not a logical tautology, a statement true by virtue of its logical form alone. It is arguably not even a rhetorical tautology (i.e. tautology-as-figure-of-speech, as I have been calling it, or redundancy), but even if it were, this does not make it necessarily correct, as I have pointed out before.

The reason I complained about changing the indefinite article into a definite article is that it alters the meaning of the sentence: semantics. But, analytically, we could say it changes the logical form of the sentence as well: instead of a variable bound by the universal quantifier (a flower is a rose indicates that "for all x, x is a flower iff x is a rose), the definite article gives us an existential quantifier (there exists an x such that x is a flower iff x is a rose). The latter is true of some given objects, since some flowers are roses, but the former is never true, since it is predicated of all objects, and most flowers aren't roses. Also, in a logical tautology, swapping the positions of the variables, because it does not change the syntax of the sentence, results in a sentence which is still a tautology. To use CaveBat's example from Peirce, if we take  $(p \rightarrow (q \rightarrow p))$  and do a swap, we have  $(q \rightarrow (p \rightarrow q))$ : another tautology (actually the same one, but whatever). So, we should be able to do this with roses and flowers if the sentence were tautologous. But in order to keep it true, when swapping them around, you needed to alter the semantic meaning of the sentence beyond just the two nouns: you had to change the quantifier.

Since we had already established by that stage that the sentence was not a tautology by virtue of its syntax, any attempt to slyly change the meaning of the sentence needed to be pointed out. As it happens, the manner in which you chose to make use of oh-so-convenient change of meaning didn't actually matter, later on. But I couldn't have known that at the time, so I saw fit to point out the trick. Also, Asmodeus, something you have to realise is that while in artificial languages the distinction between syntax and semantics is usually clearcut, in a natural language such as English this is not always the case.

Being maximally charitable, let us imagine that principles such as "Mind=Reality" are tautologous in the rhetorical sense. What does this tell us about their truth value? Nothing. So of what benefit is it to the CTMU to claim that they are tautologies like this? None whatsoever. Analytic philosophy often proceeds by showing that one statement necessarily entails another. Perhaps that is what Langan meant by "tautology".

But not all analytic philosophy is necessarily true, either: it is only true contingent upon the truth of its premises. This simply is not good enough for something claiming to be the "ultimate theory": it has to be necessarily true, which can only be achieved by the manipulation of logical tautologies. But this isn't what happens in the CTMU.

Asmodeus, you are completely and utterly wrong. You do not even understand what "tautology" means, and blur the lines between the two meanings so completely that you seemingly fail to understand the implications of this for the CTMU (reminiscent of the first article on the CTMU, which you also tried to save from deletion, which said that the CTMU may be called the "unified field theory" because it blurs the lines between all scientific fields to the point where they may no longer be individually distinguished: as far as I'm concerned, anyone who can defend a piece of writing which makes statements like that, simply does not know anything about anything). And all the other so-called "errors" I have made, all 46 of them, are actually not my errors, but points where your personal understanding of words and concepts departs so radically from the meanings generally assigned to them that you regard someone who uses words in the generally accepted fashion as being "incorrect".

You indicate above, Asmodeus, that you no longer want to do this. If you want to jump ship now, that's fine. Probably the best option for you, actually, since you have so irrevocably proven your ignorance: better to slink away like a "freedom fighter" from Angola, who fires a few parting salvos from his AK47 over his shoulder (without even turning to face his target) as he runs from the engagement. So don't feel obliged to carry on. Just know, now, that I have a wonderful body of errors that you have made, and shown that your supposed "error count" is nothing of the sort. I note also that you still haven't addressed some of the points I made above, like Langan's abuse of terminology, the nonsensical, circular nature of the SPSCCL, the hypocrisy inherent in many of your arguments, etc. Great tactic, that, to claim that what I have written is "low-grade nonsense", when in actuality everyone knows it is all valid, but you simply cannot argue with it anymore. As a reminder to ourselves, let's have another look at the guide from the Internet Infidels board on how to conduct a Langanian argument:

Enter a CTMU discussion. Treat fallacies as if they are irrelevant.

If those that proposed the fallacies insist, state that the CTMU is too big to be bothered with minor fallacies.

Insist that the CTMU is mathematical without offering supporting evidence. Engage people in show-off pseudo-intellectual discussions on Maths, metaphysics, (analytical) philosophy, linguistics and fringe-science.

Try to wear the posters down.

Try to wear them down. Shift arguments, throw in red herrings, treat vague statements as accurate. Mount semantic wars. Question the competence of posters.

Wear them down.

If all else fails, make snide remarks, aggrandize ones ability to crush the minute arguments raised, and make "motions" to leave the discussion which is at that point now allegedly too "inferior" to bother about.

Hang around/ lurk - (getting back the breath perhaps or looking for a crack to get a foothold since its evidently lost).

Go back to 1

So, I take it we are somewhere between steps 7 and 8? Byrgenwulf 07:33, 30 August 2006 (UTC)

Bravo Byrgenwulf! Your points are so clearly explicated. You are both a skillful thinker and writer! No doubt Langan will not risk debating you. I hadn't realized how fundamentally flawed the

CTMU is until following you and Asmodeus. Yet a web search shows that the CTMU is fairly widespread. Since you now have a better understanding of it than most or anyone, you might write up a critique and make it available on the web. Otherwise, most netizens who encounter it and lack higher education in areas it addresses are easily swayed by its high-falutin terminology in conjunction with the media's aggrandization of its author. There is, as far as I can see, no formal critique of this much-touted "theory". CaveBat 17:05, 30 August 2006 (UTC)

**Response to Rumpelstiltskin:** To make an interminable story short, and to simply ignore the worst and most irrelevant of your ongoing nonsense, you're simply asserting that the  $M=R$  principle is nontautological. Because this principle asserts a limited equivalence between two terms,  $M = \text{mind}$  and  $R = \text{reality}$ , you are denying that this relationship ( $\text{mind} = \text{reality}$ ) is tautological in the sense of logical necessity.

First, a little background: this principle is really just a statement of empiricism. Empiricism says that reality consists of perceptions or perceptual events. Now, the only way that perception can occur is through a processor which is capable of it...i.e., a percipient. Therefore, empiricism is really the statement that reality consists of an irreducible combination of percipient and perception; because perceptions include not only percipients but percepts (perceived objects, elements of "objective reality" supposedly independent of perception), it follows that reality also consists of an irreducible combination of percipient and percept.

But while this happens to be a very respectable philosophical thesis, that alone does not validate it. The British empiricists and their followers never got around to explicating their thesis, which encompasses many of the roots of modern science, to the required extent. However, they could easily have done so simply by exploiting its tautological nature. Again, in order to avoid your incessant complaints and ridiculous definitional hairsplitting, we will for the nonce replace this contested term "tautology" with generic logical necessity.

Let's elaborate on that a little. A logical tautology like  $\text{not}(A \text{ and } \text{not-}A)$  is characterized by the fact that it remains true no matter what the variable  $A$  happens to signify. In other words, its truth is logically necessary. Now take a look at " $\text{Mind} = \text{Reality}$ ". Both  $M$  and  $R$  are variables in the sense that their contents can vary, but they also have distinct constant aspects - one is always "mental" (like a percipient), while the other is always real (like a perception, e.g., an act of scientific observation). The question is thus, are percipients necessarily conflated with perceptions?

The answer is both intuitively and analytically obvious, and it is unequivocally yes. You can't have a perception without a percipient. Therefore, we have what I've chosen to call an "analytic" or "semantic tautology" (you can call it whatever you like, but the CTMU is Langan's theory, and I believe that my choice of terminology closely parallels Langan's own). So that's it, Q.E.D. Error number 47.

Now that we've put our fingers on your most recent error, let's have a closer look. Although  $M=R$  is what Langan would call a "semantic tautology", a distinction is normally made between percipients and percepts. While these too are conflated by  $M=R$ , they can also to some extent be distinguished. Therefore, they have a nonempty intersect and a disjunction. As the PCID paper makes abundantly clear, the  $M=R$  principle is simply the basis on which their nonempty intersection is taken, and their disjunction interpretatively accommodated. Langan identifies this nonempty intersection, which includes logic, as "SCSPL syntax". In particular, this syntax includes logical tautologies.

Mathematically, logic is a language, and algebraically, we already know what a language looks like. But how must the language concept be altered and extended in order to use the language of logic as the syntax of a "larger" language capable of accommodating the  $M=R$  disjunction, and of serving as

the framework of an overall theory of reality? The CTMU and SCSPL comprise the answer to this question. Let your errors occasion your enlightenment, and you will become a better person for it.

Now for the backlog.

29. In the course of this discussion, I have always properly distinguished and related the different kinds of tautology. You, on the other hand, apparently failed to understand these distinctions, and therefore concluded that I must have been referring to logical tautology alone. That's your mistake, not mine.

30. No, the uber-troll is hardly as notable as Grendel. It's just a hyperactive Internet troll who uses many pseudonyms and often claims to be located in Africa. I was once informed that it had developed a fixation on Langan and the CTMU. For my own part, I have indeed been periodically annoyed by "Africans" inexpertly affecting various levels of English fluency. For what it's worth, you would be one of the more fluent variants.

31. You're apparently trying hard to become a privileged member of the biggest and most exclusive club of all: Academia, Inc. In all likelihood, you have spent and/or borrowed a lot of money to do so, and sucked up so much abuse and disinformation that very little of your personal dignity, and philosophical integrity, remains intact.

34. No, you're still unqualified, because you make too many elementary mistakes to be qualified. Of the 47 errors for which you've thus far been nailed, I stand by my determinations on all of them. Only a small fraction would prove you unqualified to pretend expertise about much of anything, much less a potentially important theory containing many new ideas.

36. Who cares about your misunderstanding of Godel, to which we all became reconciled prior to the CTMU AfD? The diagonalization reference was your mistake. You claim that you made this mistake deliberately. But in my opinion, you made it out of pure confusion, caught it some time later, and then tried to blame your opponent for not wasting further time to educate you on the distinction. This ploy evidently worked on the peanut gallery, but not everyone is that easy to fool.

37. You have already shown that you understand almost as little about SCSPL structure and dynamics as they did in the 16th century. Therefore, the naivete is all yours.

38. A language is an overall algebraic relationship of linguistic components which contains various kinds of relationship, including semantic relationships. This is inarguable, and it involves no misuse of terminology. If you don't believe me, go ask one of your instructors. Your wheel-and-car analogy doesn't fit, and therefore constitutes another error. [48 errors]

39. I'll agree that somebody is parading his ignorance, but it's not me. In the context of a given mathematical structure (e.g. Euclidean geometry), duality is characterized by the partial invariance of a property or relationship of that structure under a switch involving unary (point-like) and binary (edge-like) relations. For example, consider the following relationship: "Two points determine a line segment (as its endpoints)." Switching points for lines, we get "Two (intersecting) line segments determine a point (of intersection)." Behold an example of duality! Similarly,  $V$  and  $V^*$  share vector space structure despite the fact that the elements of  $V^*$  map the elements of  $V$  into  $\mathbb{R}$ , changing linear entities (the vectors in  $V$ ) into "endpoints" of dual-linear entities (the vectorial elements of  $V^*$ ). It thus appears that we have changed lines into points while leaving certain aspects of vector space structure intact, and this too fits the above definition (although, as you correctly point out, there are differences among specific realizations of the duality concept). That's the first error you've made here. Your

second error: in (e.g.) graph theory, edges are precisely the binary adjacency relationships between unary vertices. Congratulations - you've now split one error into two, one for each of the two mathematical structures on which your confusion centers. [49 errors]

40. Mind = reality is in fact identical to syntax (see the beginning of this response); syntax is the distributed intersect of M and R, which are therefore identical within its range. The existence of this intersect is not an assumption; it follows directly from the generic fact of observation. This has been repeatedly explained to you, and your obstinate refusal to acknowledge it constitutes another error. [50 errors]

41. Once again, I'll agree that somebody doesn't understand the meaning of certain terms...but that would be you. The problem of induction refers to the fact that inductive inference entails the uniformity of nature, which is also what it seeks to establish. This kind of circularity is implicit in all inductive processes; induction is extrapolative by nature, and thus requires a basis of extrapolation. The CTMU recognizes the inexorability of this inductive circularity, but instead of basing it on localized observations or semantic operations which may not be general (and are therefore subject to the problem of induction), bases it on syntax, as implied by the generic fact of observation. That's the only way to deal with the problem of induction. Secondly, if nature were not uniform with respect to logical syntax, then the mind - which shares that syntax with reality (that's the M=R principle) - would lack a uniform grammar in terms of which to recognize (and scientifically observe) nature. You can't bargain your way out of this; if logic does not distribute over nature as syntax, then goodbye observation, and goodbye nature. (By the way, you are right about one thing: by the necessity of explanatory closure, the problem of reality must indeed be intrinsically transformed into its own solution. That is, closure ultimately demands circularity. If you can't accept this, then you should study a shallower sort of philosophy more distant from ontology.)

43,44. I've got to hand it to you, Rumpelstiltskin - there's nothing quite as poignant as (what sounds like) Christian sensibility from somebody who has disowned his soul.

45. (see error 39, on which you managed to base two distinct errors)

46. It all comes down to syndiffeonesis. In order to distinguish a ratewise difference between any pair of physical processes, we need a form of processing which distributes over (embeds, carries) both subprocesses, i.e., which is coherent with respect to them and thus transpires at one distributed rate. (Forget about parallel recognition of relative values without distributed processing, and remember that we're not talking about a "background process", but a distributed process which is occurring through localized grammatical processors.) Thus, we require an invariant metavelocity...a pregeometric simulation process that transpires at one uniform rate. This simple observation makes it unnecessary to rely on Maxwell's equations or the Michelson-Morley experiment to understand why an invariant "metavelocity" must hold (although one does need to go beyond this simple kind of reasoning to assign it an exact value). In the CTMU, this metavelocity is the invariant rate of conspansion  $c$ , and it corresponds to the speed of light in vacuo. [51 errors]

47. You claim that the statement "nobody has ever actually seen a set coherently include itself in the usual confused sense of that phrase - it has a more detailed interpretation in the CTMU" is "funny" because "Langan defines the SPSCCL's global processor  $\Gamma$  to contain a set  $O$  of active reflexive objects, which in turn contains  $\Gamma$ ." But we're talking about two distinct senses of inclusion or containment here, and as I've already pointed out, this dual kind of self-containment is not identical to the muddled, paradoxical sort of self-containment current in standard set theory. Unlike the CTMU, set theory offers no means or mechanism for self-inclusion; as I say, nobody has ever seen a set include itself as an element, much less by way of the limited operations available within set theory. That's why

set theory incorporates semantic barriers which simply preclude its expression. [52 errors - and once again, congratulations!]

Incidentally, you have already lost this debate many times over. If I "jump ship", it will only be due to the fact that you are wasting my time with your absurd and utterly tedious insistence that no matter how many errors you make, you are nevertheless entitled to keep making them. Having established to my complete satisfaction that your critiques remain fundamentally incorrect, I now regard the debate as over, and you as having been about as thoroughly squashed as an opponent can be. Accordingly, if you want this dialogue to continue in any form, you should take care how you address me. Otherwise, you will either receive no response, or a brief reminder that having made over 50 errors, you are no longer entitled to have your criticisms taken seriously.

Speaking of which...as previously agreed, Langan now owns that part of you which ties you to the SCSPL identity, and is not claimed by the identity itself (which claim Langan would regard as prior). He is, of course, free to reject anything too corrupt for salvage, and will probably do so. Since you do not recognize the existence of this part of yourself, which Langan has called the "soul", this will probably not cause you the slightest qualm. Now have a nice day. Asmodeus 16:37, 31 August 2006 (UTC)

Wikipedia is not here to provide a forum for discussion, but for the record, in my experience the universe cares very little for English language word playing. Take the debate to some forum elsewhere, anywhere. Jeffire 16:42, 31 August 2006 (UTC)

Unless one is performing an experiment or building a device, it's all "word games". The "word games" that I play rely heavily on logic, considered as a branch of mathematics. Rumpelstiltskin decided to contest certain logical issues on his Talk page, and that was his right. If you dispute this, then take it up with Rumpelstiltskin - it was his debate. Asmodeus 17:23, 31 August 2006 (UTC)

Asmodeus, you just don't get it, do you? Mathematics, philosophy, physics and formal logic all make use of quite a bit of terminology. This terminology is not just there to make whoever is using it sound knowledgeable or impressive. It is there because each word carries with it a very specific meaning, and if one does not use these words in the manner in which they are generally used, one is bound to make mistakes in one's work.

Let's look at the  $M=R$  phenomenon a little more closely. What you are essentially saying is that there are perceptions, things which pick up on and process perceptions, which you call percipients, and things which are perceived, i.e. percepts. Fine: that is straightforward. You say, then, that there is a "non-empty intersection" between perceptions and percipients. First, a non-empty intersection, as you ought to know, is not expressed by an "equals" sign, which is usually used to denote identity. Next, the objects of reference of mind and reality are not the same. Let's denote by "m" the things which can be said to be a part of mind, and "r" the things that can be said to be a part of reality.

Now, we can devise a relation, let's call it "N", which maps states of "m" into states of "r"...a sort of "epistemic naturalisation function", we could say, since ultimately our minds are based on our brains, which are simply lumps of warm, wet matter. Any content held in our mind must, a little bit of common sense tells us, be expressible as a state of matter, unless we wish to embrace some sort of horrid dualism. An interesting question, as it turns out, is what kind of relation this "N" is: is it one-one, onto, etc.? Can multiple states of mind be represented by a single state of matter? Can a single state of mind be represented by multiple states of matter, etc.? Importantly, the answers to those questions are not trivial.

However, we must be careful here. You see, the objects in the domain of this relation are not in the same group as the objects in the codomain of the relation...because that is precisely what the relation does, is take objects from one group and map them into objects from another.

The moral of the little story above is this. Your argument, Asmodeus, about empiricism, percipients, perception, etc., tells us very little besides the fact that this relation must exist. It is even something with which I agree 100%. What your argument does not do, however, is show in exactly what way this is a "logical necessity" in the sense that  $(P \text{ or not-}P)$  is. Nor does it show how this "intersection" between mind and reality is an inevitable semantic offshoot of the common meanings assigned to "mind" and "reality". Nor does it tell us anything about the nature of this relation. Nor does the CTMU paper do any of that.

You see, I am prepared to grant that this "non-empty intersection" is a sound philosophical position. But I cannot grant that it is a "tautology", either "semantic" or "syntactic". It is contingent on too many other assumptions to hold this distinction. Calling it "tautologous" amounts to the assertion of the triviality, or possibly even non-existence, of the relation "N", which is simply an untenable position. After all, in a sense the SPSCl would appear to be an exploration of the properties of this relation, one might say.

So, I understand Langan's compulsion to claim for the SPSCl the status of "absolute and necessary truth". But simply because we "cannot have a perception without a percipient" does not mean that "mind=reality" tautologically (and I use "tautologically" here as a synonym for "as an irrefutable analytical consequence"). It is, in fact, a category mistake of the archetypical variety to do so.

I know that you are going to be unable to accept all of this, Asmodeus. Because clearly this bad habit of thought is so engrained in your consciousness that you won't be able to shake it without making a huge effort, and you see no reason to do so, because you believe it to be right. A vicious circle. But whatever: it is, ultimately, your choice.

Selected comments on the "backlog"

29. A quick survey of the above discussion tells me that it is the other way around.

30. That would probably be because I am not an "African" by birth.

34. Disagreeing with someone who is deluded as to their own level of understanding is only a mistake insofar as it is a waste of one's own time. It is not an error of fact or knowledge, but it is a mistake I have made repeatedly here on Wikipedia. Congratulations: this is the first mistake I have made that you have identified.

36. Bollocks and bluster to try to cover up your error of omission. For shame.

37. What's there to understand about SPSCl? It is a puff of smoke.

38. No, you're wrong. We must distinguish here between formal and natural languages. Since we're talking about a formal language (the SPSCl), I shall restrict my comment to that. A formal language is a set. This set may represent or even contain relations, yes, just as a car has wheels, but it is not a relation itself. Please make sure you understand the meanings of very basic words before trumpeting your ignorance, unless you actually enjoy making a prat of yourself.

39. Vertices in graph theory are not "unary relations". Unary relations are properties: in maths, they are often Boolean-valued expressions, i.e. having a true or false value. The arity of a relation refers to the number of arguments it has: a unary relation has one, binary relation two, etc. In graph theory, we can specify a graph in two main ways: adjacency and incidence. Either we treat the vertices as basic objects and use the edges as a means of specifying adjacency relations between these objects, or we treat edges as the basic objects and use the vertices as a means of specifying incidence relations between edges. In the former case, vertices are objects, not relations. In the latter case, vertices are relations, but are not necessarily unary: there can be any number of edges incident on a given vertex. And not even in all graphs are edges binary relations: in a hypergraph, for example, edges can be incident on any number of vertices (this latter point is a little too general, perhaps, since we can restrict

ourselves to graphs proper, but the vertices gaff clinches it). So "vertices and edges corresponding to unary and binary relations respectively" (which is what Asmodeus said) is indeed bollocks. And, let us not forget that Asmodeus tried to explain that the notions of duality in projective geometry and vector spaces are the same thing by making an inspecific but verbose appeal to category theory, in which he confounded the commutative diagrams used in category theory with graphs (while it is conceivable that theorems from graph theory may help in deciding whether a given diagram commutes, chances are that the principles of category theory itself will be more helpful). About the only common strain that runs through all mathematical notions of duality, Asmodeus, is that the dual of (the dual of an object) is the object itself. But this has no perfectly general category theoretic expression, simply because not all the mathematical objects to which duality is applied form categories (category theory is not a licence to generalise freely: on the contrary, it gives us the set of rules for deciding whether or not a generalisation is appropriate, and there are some very specific requirements that a set of objects with their morphisms must meet in order to be called a "category"). I would also dispute that only a "mathematical ignoramus" could be ignorant of category theory: I am not a mathematician, but I happen to be extremely interested in category theory, and use it for my work...and I am certain that many actuaries, for example, who are not mathematical ignorami, do not even know what category theory is. Finally, appealing to abstract nonsense and other manifestations of pseudo-erudition does not work as a tactic against me, or any other vaguely competent person. I would have thought you'd realised this by now. If you are interested in learning more about category theory, since you seem to know so little and understand less, I can recommend this primer, which is written by a mutual acquaintance of ours, none other than the sentient software agent itself. Repeatedly having to explain very simple concepts from first principles is tiresome work, so I'll let a .pdf do it for me.

40. The "intersection of M and R" can only be coherently expressed as the intersection of  $N(m)$  and  $r$  (see my comment above), and so whether or not this is "syntax" (and you have a peculiar way of using the word "syntax"), the manner in which the CTMU treats it is lacking.

41. Asmodeus tells us that the only way to deal with the problem of induction is to base the solution on a "generic fact", i.e. observation. But this itself makes use of induction. So we still haven't broken out of the problem yet, and are no closer to finding a solution that is not based on turning the problem into a quintain (a verbose sort of straw-man). Admiral Quine once came up with a lovely expression: "our argument is not strictly circular, but rather takes, figuratively speaking, the form of a closed curve in space". I agree that any argument regarding ontology must be a closed curve in space (of course, because human minds have to explain their own existence), but this does not mean that every example of an obviously circular statement is par for the course. Really, now.

43, 44. I have reason to believe that you are acquainted with the quasi-legendary über-troll Andrew Beckwith. Well, his online antics gave rise to the sarcastic expression "Andrew Beckwith pities you". Does this explain things a bit better?

46. This still does not explain why we should equate the "rate of conspansion" with the speed of light, other than that it is convenient to do so, since we know that the speed of light is invariant, just as the "rate of conspansion" is meant to be. Moreover, the speed of light is not a "metavelocity": it is a speed, plain and simple. Also, Langan calls the "rate of conspansion" a "time/space conversion factor". The speed of light is not that: it is the distance that light moves in a given time interval ("conspansive duality" be damned). Finally, SR has a very specific mathematical structure, giving rise to the light cones and hyperplanes of simultaneity and all that, which is derived from the Lorentz transformations. It is not proven in the CTMU that this "rate of conspansion", or "syndiffeonesis" gives rise to an identical formulation to the Lorentz transformations; also, the speed of light is not just any invariant, but Lorentz invariant: has this been proven for "conspansion"? It cannot, of course, be done, with appeal to "conspansive duality", but this would probably involve using the Lorentz transformations as a "given", which doesn't cut it. Most of Asmodeus' argument in his point 46, though, is just bluster, and if one looks at it carefully, one point does not actually follow from the next. And the statement "in order to distinguish a ratewise difference between any pair of physical processes, we need a form of processing which distributes over (embeds, carries) both subprocesses, i.e., which is coherent with



respect to them and thus transpires at one distributed rate" is tantamount to the assertion of the "infocognitive" equivalent of an aether theory, mutatis mutandis (particularly when coupled with the "scaling" of "absolute size" of objects, in as much as that has any meaning at all, be it physical or metaphysical, other than a change in Planck's constant related to the "size" of the universe - this can only be avoided if Planck's constant is a ratio between the "size" of a quantum and the "size" of the universe, but this doesn't work because "size" here is not well defined, and an undefined concept cannot have properties, since the ascription of any property is tantamount to a definition of sorts: in short, this part of the CTMU paper, and Asmodeus' defence of it, is a stream of unmitigated conceptual confusion).

47. Utter nonsense: there is nothing in the SPSCCL which guarantees that there will be no problems with self-inclusion, other than Langan's personal insistence on this, which counts for less than nothing. Also, we are not talking about two distinct notions of "inclusion" here: we are talking about membership of a set.  $O$  forms a subset of  $\Gamma$ , and  $\Gamma$  forms a subset of  $O$ : at least that is what the CTMU paper asserts. And Langan provides no means superior to ordinary set theory (in fact, it is not clear in exactly what way his musings depart from set theory in a beneficial way) for the resolution of statements such as this. Little "MU diagrams" don't help, really. A diagram doesn't prove anything.

Asmodeus, your "error count" is totally invalid. Indeed, I am well entitled to say that it is more accurately a count of the number of times you've embarrassed yourself here. Sometime, if I can summon up the will to do so, I might bother counting your total number of errors, and add the number of errors in the CTMU paper to that, for good measure (and because I believe they are your errors as well: even if you are not the originator of the theory, you still err by propounding its validity). But, at a quick count, let's see: you claim that I have made 52 errors. So actually, you have made at least 52 errors. However, claiming that those are my errors in each case is also an error, so that makes it at least 104. Over 100 errors, Asmodeus, is something of which even the most brazen self-proclaimed genius ought to be ashamed, especially when they are made against someone as obviously inferior as myself. So the score is Asmodeus:104; Byrgenwulf:1 (see point 34). Not too shabby, I suppose.

As for my "soul": whoever said that you have proven me wrong? Only you seem to have that opinion, and obviously that doesn't count, since you're biased. So don't get ahead of yourself. You still have a long way to go before you establish to my satisfaction that the CTMU is in any way correct. A good start might be to admit the mistakes you've made so far, and try a different tack, such as using sound reasoning to prove your case, and not verbosity and bloody-minded insistence on being correct. Now have a nice day.

CaveBat, I am flattered that you think I have been at all lucid here. And as for writing a detailed critique on the CTMU, it is something which I have thought about, and intend on doing at some time, once my current state of frenzied real-world obligation has died down a little. I agree that the number of people on Internet forums and so forth who appear to be taken in by it, simply because it sounds very impressive and the chap who invented it is allegedly so clever, is rather alarming: and these people need to be informed of the truth. I think the reason that there is no "formal critique" of this theory is simply that most people would rather make a positive contribution to their field than waste time on exorcising nonsense. But, I do see it as something of a social duty to educate the public and help dispel the mists of ignorance that tend to settle everywhere that people congregate, so I definitely shall write up a debunking at some stage.

As for the CTMU's inventor Himself discussing it with me, I have reason to believe that you have already borne witness to that happening. And seen him being soundly humiliated (to which you contributed quite handily, pressing home the point about rose/flower tautologies as you did). Ah well, c'est la vie, even "the smartest man in the world" cannot always be right, even if he cannot admit it himself.

Jefffire, I agree with you that this is hardly the best place to be playing word games about the CTMU. However, since Asmodeus came and deposited a list of alleged "errors", I felt obliged to respond, and things somewhat spiralled from there. Hopefully, though, Asmodeus is going to skulk away again, now

that he has proven his position to be completely untenable. Then I can archive this mammoth talk page and put this matter to bed. Byrgenwulf 12:39, 2 September 2006 (UTC)

For sod's sake, if someone is daft enough to believe that rubbish in the first place then mere reason isn't going to convince them otherwise. Anyone with more than half a wit can see that the whole argument rests on the foibles of the English language, essentially making the fallacy as the "You can't cross the same river twice" argument. I don't donate to see the bandwidth taken up with this sort of thng. Leave the cultists with their smug sense of self satisfaction, it doesn't hurt you, and they're hardly likely to convince anyone who doesn't think personal insults are a valid debating tool. Archive this rubbish, and delete anything else added by Asmodeus with the edit summary "Whatever...". Jeffire 14:41, 2 September 2006 (UTC)

I agree emotionally with Jeffire's statement here. However, reading through the "debate" on this page has given me the same genre of pleasure as PZ Myers's slashings of creationism or the Panda's Thumb fisting of the book *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Darwinism and Intelligent Design*. The good people of the Thumb are currently in the midst of demonstrating that this book "is not only politically incorrect but incorrect in most other ways as well: scientifically, logically, historically, legally, academically, and morally"; what's more, they're doing the job with commendable clarity.

Empirically speaking, the debunkings of pseudo-intellectual nonsense have almost always been more interesting than the nonsense itself. It is for all practical purposes impossible to convince a "true believer" that he has been bamboozled or is bamboozling himself, but a solid piece of critical analysis can do wonders for the fence-sitters, the laity whose attention is captured by a self-appointed priesthood — and who only need to exercise a little critical thought to find themselves free again. If nothing else, debunking Velikovsky has created a few opportunities to teach real astronomy; in the case at hand, a few people might get a taste of Quine they would have otherwise lived without. Anville 15:12, 2 September 2006 (UTC)

**Response to Rumpelstiltskin:** In view of the unkind way you continue to mislead your befuddled but nonetheless adoring peanut gallery, I suppose I'd better attend to some of your most recent mistakes.

1. "What you are essentially saying is that there are perceptions, things which pick up on and process perceptions, which you call percipients, and things which are perceived, i.e. percepts. Fine: that is straightforward."

Well, good!

2. "You say, then, that there is a "non-empty intersection" between perceptions and percipients. First, a non-empty intersection, as you ought to know, is not expressed by an "equals" sign, which is usually used to denote identity."

The "=" sign means identity within the range of the intersect (using the intersect symbol here would have conveyed a set-theoretic bias, and that might have been even more confusing to someone suffering from brittle terminology syndrome). Beyond the intersect, identity still applies on a reductive level; since the intersect functions as a medium, all of its content can be said to consist of it, and is identical in that sense. This was all made perfectly clear. You might not have been able to figure it out, but Langan did explain it, so any confusion on that score would be your own fault. [53 errors]

3. "Next, the objects of reference of mind and reality are not the same."

So reality has "objects of reference"? Aren't you trapping yourself in a misuse of language? If reality

has "objects of reference", then it refers. But reference is a function of language and mind. Hence, your statement implies that reality shares certain key functions of language and mind. This implies that you accept at least one fundamental premise of the CTMU. (On the other hand, maybe you mean "the objects to which the given terms refer"...in which case, the objects directly acquired by reference both exist within the language processor employing those terms and are to that extent identically reducible to their common processing medium.) [54 errors]

4. "Let's denote by "m" the things which can be said to be a part of mind, and "r" the things that can be said to be a part of reality."

...but of course, with no prior assumption of any fundamental difference. Assuming such a difference at the outset would amount to circular reasoning, which you claim to reject.

5. "Now, we can devise a relation, let's call it "N", which maps states of "m" into states of "r"...a sort of "epistemic naturalisation function", we could say,..."

...and vice versa, just for the sake of symmetry. That is, rather than just  $N = N:m \rightarrow r$ , what we actually have is  $N = (N1:m \rightarrow r, N2:r \rightarrow m)$ . Once again, asserting an asymmetry at this point would amount to circular reasoning, which you claim to reject. [Arguably an error, but I'll cut you some slack.]

6. "...since ultimately our minds are based on our brains, which are simply lumps of warm, wet matter."

...by your personal assumption, which you can't prove and which many others do not accept for very good reasons. One of those reasons may be that you have not yet adequately defined "matter". (For his own part, Langan defines "matter" as a particular kind of reflexive information processor, but I take it that you disagree.) [55 errors]

7. "Any content held in our mind must, a little bit of common sense tells us, be expressible as a state of matter, unless we wish to embrace some sort of horrid dualism."

You seem to be talking about "supervenience", and you don't want to be making any circular assumptions there either. On the other hand, if you mean that mental content must be associated or correlated with processors...well, the CTMU contains the implications of that statement. (By the way, to assume that materialism is the only escape from dualism is simply ridiculous. Even if the CTMU did not exist, there would be other forms of monism to consider.) [56 errors]

8. "An interesting question, as it turns out, is what kind of relation this "N" is: is it one-one, onto, etc.? Can multiple states of mind be represented by a single state of matter? Can a single state of mind be represented by multiple states of matter, etc.? Importantly, the answers to those questions are not trivial."

How right you are! These questions are indeed interesting, and the answers are indeed nontrivial. Clearly, given that empirical science is doing nothing to answer them, a larger conceptual framework is urgently required.

9. "However, we must be careful here. You see, the objects in the domain of this relation are not in the same group as the objects in the codomain of the relation...because that is precisely what the relation does, is take objects from one group and map them into objects from another."

But again, that's an assumption. You have no a priori knowledge that the domain and codomain are not merely different aspects of one and the same thing. In fact, they must be; relations, like their

relands, require support by some sort of distributed storage and processing medium, and the distributed intersect of the relands is the only medium that can do the job. (A medium which is nondistributive on its most general level is disconnected, and cannot accommodate a structurally or dynamically connected reality as content.) [57 errors]

10. "...this "non-empty intersection" is a sound philosophical position. But I cannot grant that it is a "tautology", either "semantic" or "syntactic". It is contingent on too many other assumptions to hold this distinction."

Then name the "assumptions" without making any of your own. You can start by eliminating all of the assumptions on which you have just been called. [Your presumption is arguably an error, but I'll let it pass.]

11. "Calling it "tautologous" amounts to the assertion of the triviality, or possibly even non-existence, of the relation "N", which is simply an untenable position."

If you choose to define "tautology" in so restricted a way, then feel free to replace it with "logical necessity". The logical necessity of the relation "N", the extent of which is simply contracted to 0 in the CTMU, in no way makes it trivial or nonexistent. [58 errors]

12. "After all, in a sense the SPSCL would appear to be an exploration of the properties of this relation, one might say."

That's right. It is also an exploration of the logical entailments of this relation, including the nature and functionality of the storage and processing medium which coherently supports it.

Let me give you a piece of friendly advice. If you really are a would-be philosopher, and if your name is really "Rumpelstiltskin", then you should really start being more careful. As an aspiring academic, you are in no position to claim that you have read and understood a paper while trying to use the truth of its own assertions against it, even on the grounds that its author may have transgressed certain neat-and-tidy terminological boundaries to which you are personally attached. You're supposed to make an effort to work within the author's framework and comprehend the author's points; that's what it means to "understand" his work. After all, he may have had a reason for using the terms he has used, and you are not in a position to make summary judgments to the contrary.

People with reputations to protect understand this. It makes no difference to them that some pseudonymous "bright" has stood up to make a fool of himself, or that such a "bright" has managed to elicit approval from a similarly anonymous peanut gallery. People with actual standing in their professional communities have a right to avoid personal humiliation, and out of respect, you should stop trying to draw them into your puddle of quicksand by "recommending" their category theory primers, linking to their talk pages, and so forth. As far as they are concerned, you may well be nothing but a loud, opinionated liability bent on exposing them to personal embarrassment, and it is neither fair nor respectful of you to assume otherwise.

The rest of your critiques have already been dealt with, and you have brought to bear no new and exculpatory reasoning regarding them. Hence, they will be ignored. However, while you have already emerged the loser from the debate you started, your error count continues to rise. It now stands at 58.

[P.S. To the peanut gallery: Some of you seem to be getting impatient with this dialogue. If you don't want me to respond to Rumpelstiltskin's ongoing nonsense, then stay out of the discussion. As long as you insist on conveying the false impression that Rumpelstiltskin's errors have somehow enabled him

to emerge victorious, I'll be forced to look out for the intellectual welfare of those few innocents who bother to read Wikipedia's member talk pages.] Asmodeus 16:42, 3 September 2006 (UTC)

Now try it in Chinese ;) . Jeffire 17:24, 3 September 2006 (UTC)

**Response to Jeffire:** Be careful - although you seem to be somewhat less enamored than Rumpelstiltskin of pointless terminological hairsplitting and other circumnavigations of content, the irrationality of your remarks is just as obvious and can easily be debunked in any language. Above, you stated "the whole arguement [sic] rests on the foibles of the English language, essentially making the [same] fallacy as the 'You can't cross the same river twice' arguement." To employ your own phrasing, anyone "with more than half a wit" can't help but recognize this statement as pure manure. Again, please stay out of the discussion unless you want it to continue arbitrarily. Rumpelstiltskin is evidently encouraged by your sniping, and as long as it persists, will not be able to keep still. Asmodeus 18:28, 3 September 2006 (UTC)

But you're not even responding to the same editor, lol! Jeffire 18:33, 3 September 2006 (UTC)

Hello Asmodeus. I am going to confine my comments here to the absolute minimum. First, a little bit of etiquette. I am not on first name terms with you. Therefore, you may address me as "Byrgenwulf", or, if you insist on using my RL identity, you may call me "Mr. O'Grady". But I would prefer it if you do not use my first name. Thanks.

Next, on terminology: normally, I am not quite so preoccupied about terminology. However, since both you and the CTMU toss so much of it about, and much of it is misused, I saw fit to raise this fact, and press it home. Words have meanings, and if we don't use them in the correct fashion, we cannot expect the results of our musings to be valid.

On assumptions. I never claimed that what I said contained no assumptions: on the other hand, the CTMU does make that claim. But, if I make a statement which is contrary to the CTMU, and my statement is an assumption, then its negation in the CTMU must also be an assumption, namely the negation of my own. Alright, maybe not an assumption: it may be the conclusion to what may even be a convincing argument. But it is not always a self-evident fact.

On circularity. Reality does not have objects of reference. The word "reality", however, does. That is obviously what I meant, and once again, it is the failure to appreciate subtleties like that which renders the CTMU flawed. Lines are constantly blurred between object and theory, language and metalanguage, model and interpretation.

On reputation. I believe you are kidding yourself when you think that the reason the CTMU has not received serious criticism from "people with reputations to protect" is because they will damage their reputations by doing so. It is certainly true that personal insults are far more common currency in CTMU debates than in many other fields, and no sane person would expose themselves to that by choice, I don't think, but then no-one takes your invective too seriously, anyway. Also, all I did was link to a .pdf file of a primer on category theory, so that you might read it and hopefully better understand what you're talking about. You, on the other hand, deposited an absolutely nauseating message on John Baez's talk page, a bizarre hybrid of nudge-nudge/wink-wink sycophancy and tongue-in-cheek condescension, the presumptuousness of which is tempered only by its extreme absurdity ("just a heads-up"). So I really don't need lessons in personal conduct from you.

I have little interest in entertaining you and your delusions any longer. We are obviously not going to agree here; but I have established beyond a shadow of a doubt that the CTMU is nothing but a polysyllabic farce. I understand it, and understand what Langan is trying to do. I just feel that it is pretentious, pointless, and fundamentally misguided. You obviously feel very strongly that the opposite is the case, but my advice to you is to go and tell someone who cares, and who will believe you. No-one here seems to. What you are doing now amounts to trolling, and any new inflammatory comments

will be treated as such and removed. Let's remember that you were not invited here to discuss the CTMU: my invitation expressly stipulated that we do it elsewhere - although there is little point in that even, since I think we've said everything that needs to be said on this matter. If after 24 hours there are no new posts on this thread (not counting ongoing straw-clutching remarks from Asmodeus) I shall archive this mess. Byrgenwulf 19:26, 3 September 2006 (UTC)

**Response to Byrgenwulf:** In repayment for your merciful brevity, I'll keep my answers brief as well. However, in order to avoid confusion, I'll append them to your comments.

1. First, a little bit of etiquette. I am not on first name terms with you. Therefore, you may address me as "Byrgenwulf", or, if you insist on using my RL identity, you may call me "Mr. O'Grady". But I would prefer it if you do not use my first name. Thanks.

I disagree. If we were not on a first-name basis, you could never have squandered so much of my time so freely. However, pending your next breach of etiquette, I'll respect your wishes anyway.

2. Next, on terminology: normally, I am not quite so preoccupied about terminology. However, since both you and the CTMU toss so much of it about, and much of it is misused, I saw fit to raise this fact, and press it home. Words have meanings, and if we don't use them in the correct fashion, we cannot expect the results of our musings to be valid.

In the CTMU context, the meaning of CTMU terminology corresponds to its usage by the author of the CTMU. Regarding your impression that some of this terminology might be totally disconnected from standard usage, I helpfully directed you to a good online dictionary. Evidently, you chose not to use it. This strongly suggests that you aren't really interested in anyone's usage but yours. However, since the CTMU is not your theory, it isn't your usage that counts.

3. On assumptions. I never claimed that what I said contained no assumptions: on the other hand, the CTMU does make that claim. But, if I make a statement which is contrary to the CTMU, and my statement is an assumption, then its negation in the CTMU must also be an assumption, namely the negation of my own. Alright, maybe not an assumption: it may be the conclusion to what may even be a convincing argument. But it is not always a self-evident fact.

You're quite right - the negation of an assumption is not necessarily an assumption. After all, the original assumption may have contradicted a logical necessity (as in my opinion it did). Thanks for your frank if belated admission that the CTMU might not be a mere assumption. In view of that concession, I'm willing to grant that some may not see it as self-evident.

4. On circularity. Reality does not have objects of reference. The word "reality", however, does. That is obviously what I meant, and once again, it is the failure to appreciate subtleties like that which renders the CTMU flawed. Lines are constantly blurred between object and theory, language and metalanguage, model and interpretation.

Reality is understood largely through words connected to each other by reference. The referential connections among words are supposed to reflect real connections among the corresponding parts of reality. Yet, you seem to feel that reference is "too linguistic" to describe the true nature of these real connections themselves. In other words, reference corresponds to reality, but reality does not correspond to reference. Unfortunately, because correspondence is symmetric, that's a contradiction, and it is your seeming blindness to this kind of subtlety that weakens your criticisms of the CTMU. (If you at least realize that there are no hard, fast lines to be drawn between object and theory - that they have an unavoidable overlap - then perhaps there is reason for hope after all.)

5. On reputation. I believe you are kidding yourself when you think that the reason the CTMU has not received serious criticism from "people with reputations to protect" is because they will damage their reputations by doing so. It is certainly true that personal insults are far more common currency in CTMU debates than in many other fields, and no sane person would expose themselves to that by choice, I don't think, but then no-one takes your invective too seriously, anyway.

It's not that recognized authorities would damage their reputations by insightfully, respectfully criticizing the CTMU. They would damage their reputations by criticizing it as you have, shallowly and derisively. Just imagine how bad you could be made to look if (a) you were to become a well-known philosopher, (b) Langan and the CTMU were unconditionally vindicated, and (c) this dialogue were to emerge verbatim, revealing not only that you were instrumental in finagling its deletion from Wikipedia, but that despite what amounted to intensive personal tutoring, it remained well over your head. If you think that this sort of exchange could have no impact on your reputation, I suggest that you rethink the possibilities. (By the way - as I'm sure you must have guessed, I place little value on your opinion of my communications with others, particularly when they don't involve you. In fact, I regard them as none of your business.)

6. I have little interest in entertaining you and your delusions any longer.

Never fear - I have just as little interest in humoring your pretensions of philosophical expertise and understanding.

7. We are obviously not going to agree here; but I have established beyond a shadow of a doubt that the CTMU is nothing but a polysyllabic farce. I understand it, and understand what Langan is trying to do.

Not really. But any time you're ready to devote the time and effort to get a handle on it and put your money where your mouth is, feel free. Until then, you don't know enough to threaten the CTMU or its author in the least. (I have as little regard for your pedantic fussiness as you profess for Langan's polysyllabics.)

8. I just feel that it is pretentious, pointless, and fundamentally misguided. You obviously feel very strongly that the opposite is the case, but my advice to you is to go and tell someone who cares, and who will believe you. No-one here seems to.

Given the level of understanding thus far displayed by you and your partisans regarding the CTMU, I find this neither surprising nor discouraging. However, I do find it a mystery how your blatant philosophical prejudice could pass for "NPOV" on this site. I'd say that Wikipedia has a problem with rabid philosophical bias that has not yet been fully recognized, and that you and your newfound friends are right in the middle of it.

9. What you are doing now amounts to trolling, and any new inflammatory comments will be treated as such and removed.

That's an unfair accusation. Ever since you complained that I'd refused to debate you (see the beginning of this thread), I've been trying to give you all the attention you deserve. I'm sorry that you're still disappointed, but I tried. (I do have the right to defend myself, so if you remove these comments, they will be replaced...if need be, in the appropriate archive.)

10. Let's remember that you were not invited here to discuss the CTMU: my invitation expressly stipulated that we do it elsewhere - although there is little point in that even, since I think we've said

everything that needs to be said on this matter.

Let's be honest - you, and you alone, chose the timing and placement of this exchange without consulting me. You should hardly be surprised that your subsequent stipulations were ignored.

11. If after 24 hours there are no new posts on this thread (not counting ongoing straw-clutching remarks from Asmodeus) I shall archive this mess.

If I were you, I'd want to hide this exchange too. Incidentally, you should probably start thinking about reworking your User Page - it's rather confrontational and could easily be viewed as a challenge to be answered right here. Asmodeus 07:06, 4 September 2006 (UTC)

Oh hello, Asmodeus. I must hand it to you, that while these numbered paragraphs are a stylistic abomination reminiscent of a legal document, they do make it easier to address specific points. So on we go then!

2. Well, I certainly agree that the author of the CTMU has the right to use words however he pleases: as does anyone. However, Humpty-Dumpty diction is not really an efficient means of communication, and especially when dealing with matters as pernicky and precise as philosophy, science, and logic, one really does need to be accurate.

3. What I "admitted", Asmodeus, is that the CTMU is not a self-evident, necessary truth. That is all. And that's not really a startling observation, I shouldn't imagine.

4. I think that, as usual, you are deliberately missing the point. All that linguistic reference can do is give us a "calculus of perceptual relations". Nay, not even that, because language already distorts perception: we need to narrow down language and make it specific in order to be more accurate. And since language gives rise to a mammoth web of relations between words themselves, which web will differ from person to person in such a manner as two peoples' webs can never be completely reconciled, it does not matter that once in a while language tangentially touches upon something "real": we are still only hunting ghosts.

5. Actually, Asmodeus, I don't think that this little discussion makes me look that bad. But I shudder to think how humiliating it would be for the CTMU's originator if he were proven to be participating in this discussion under a pseudonym, insulted those who disagree with him, had a 22-year-old grad student tell him where he's gone wrong in his thinking (even if he can't accept this himself), and just generally conducted himself in a fashion which is a good deal less than becoming of someone of his alleged intellect and understanding. I also find the veiled threat in your comment quite laughable, and incredibly naïve: I can assure you, Asmodeus, that there is not much in the CTMU to be "unconditionally vindicated". What valid points it makes have been made before by other thinkers (almost all of whom go uncredited in the CTMU paper); and the pretentiousness of the author's other claims render even these few aspects of it risible and hollow. Also, Asmodeus, respect is something that has to be earned if it is to have any value. Your behaviour here is not deserving of respect, I don't think. Let's, just for a second, pretend that you are right in your insinuations: I am a precocious little upstart, and you are an all-wise, infinitely insightful sage. Even under these circumstances, your sneering manner and pompous airs would be wholly uncalled for, since I would hardly pose a threat to you, and, if you were in the right about the CTMU, your demagogic talents would have swayed the hordes at the deletion proceedings. But since the opposite is the case (I have merely been trying to bring a little bit of reason and logic to this benighted, anarchic repository of alleged knowledge, while you have been trying, unsuccessfully, to establish a place on it for your pet theory), your conduct reveals what I can only interpret as a deep-seated insecurity and fear of being found wrong; something you will not let happen under any circumstances whatsoever, and will go to extreme lengths to prevent. I mean you no personal harm, Asmodeus. However, I feel that I have a duty to those I teach and to everyone else who is trying to learn, to keep what could be a superb reference work free of misleading personal aggrandisement conducted at their expense.



6, 9, 10. Let's quickly review what has happened here, Asmodeus. A new user, CaveBat, suggested that I engage you in a debate on the CTMU. I told him that I had already made that offer to you, and been denied. You then came along and claimed that such a discussion had already happened, and deposited a list of alleged "errors" that I had made. Because, just like you do, I have a right to defend myself, I felt the need to point out that those weren't "errors" at all, merely a bulleted list of your own misinformed opinions on things. And from there on, this slinging match over various matters ensued. Now, I suggested recommencing our relationship on express terms of mutual civility: I would cease making snide remarks about the CTMU, and you would cease making snide remarks about me. But, seemingly unable to restrain yourself, you continued with your vexatious "error count", your denigration of my intellect and ability, and your disparagement of other users of this encyclopaedia (the APEs from the "WikiProject" boards). So, once again, this engagement escalated. In addition, another editor has expressed concern about the resources that this discussion is taking up...and apart from it sapping my own enthusiasm to contribute positively to this "encyclopaedia" lest my work is savaged and mauled by the hordes of self-promoting kooks with personal agendas to foist upon everyone else, having a 236kb talk page is gobbling up a sizeable chunk of my monthly broadbandwidth allotment (let us not forget that South Africa is a third world country with only one landline telecommunications operator, and we all know how monopolies affect products). And Wikipedia is still not the place for a discussion on the merits of the CTMU, Asmodeus. It is just that simple.

7. There is nothing wrong with pedantry if abuse of language has been allowed to run riot to such an extent that it interferes with the search for truth. In other words, the study of ontology and related matters is an exacting discipline. Ideally, it should be conducted as rigorously as any mathematical investigation. But, since we have been using natural language, we have to be doubly careful that our words do not lead us astray: and being loose with words can lead to problems and anomalies just as surely as division by zero in algebra can let us "prove" that  $0 = 1$ . Hence I have felt it necessary to point out that the CTMU relies on similar tricks (whether or not they were intentionally put into the theory to deceive, or are merely oversight on the part of its creator).

8. Wikipedia has many problems, Asmodeus. One of its biggest, I fear, is that it panders to the majority in all things: the morality and wisdom of the herd is to be held as inviolate and sacrosanct; it matters not whether something is correct, but merely whether it meets ephemeral criteria of "notability", "verifiability", etc. (so much for being an "authoritative" reference); objectionable individuals' activities are not only facilitated by policies and "administrators", but the situation has gotten so bad that a shiny Wikipedia article is now seen by many "epistemic minorities" as being an arbiter of the validity and respectability of their position - a problem when, on the other hand, a shiny Wikipedia article is seen by the naïve majority as being a convenient and reliable source of information, and perhaps even, to use a word which seems to be taboo around here, the truth about a given subject; the lack of any proper authority or control leaves individual editors to fight their own battles with epistemic minorities - something which most of the more competent editors are well capable of doing, but which ties up time and resources which are better spent on other things (not only on the encyclopaedia), and turns what could be a satisfying hobby into a wretched gladiatorial arena. So, in short, the philosophical bias which smothers Wikipedia is nothing but the overall atmosphere of "egalitarianism and political correctness at all costs", since what are the costs anyway, but mere trifling adornments like "truth", "reason", "logic" and "reality"? All things an encyclopaedia must obviously forsake in favour of such desirable traits as "neutrality", "inclusivity" and a hefty dose of neo-Soviet "equality". Wikipedia is a labyrinth of troll-caves into which the unwitting but well-meaning contributor is ensnared on the pretence of "openness", a terrifying glimpse of what a postmodern epistemology is like on a global scale. So, the efforts of the twenty-odd members of WikiProjects Physics and Pseudoscience in combatting weird "theories" and trying to build up and maintain a reasonable corpus of accurate articles on worthwhile subjects are very much a drop in the ocean, Asmodeus. I am sorry that you are offended by such loathsome behaviour, but then one cannot, despite the boundless wisdom contained in Wikipedia's policies, please everyone all the time. Which brings me to:

11. My userpage is inflammatory, is it? Oh no! The comments attributed to you on that page did come

out of your mouth, after all. If they sound a little weird a couple of weeks later (like my evident intent to "bite Langan's feet" or my "deceptive habit" of asking for verifiable sources for things), then maybe in future you should put a little more thought into what you write before hitting the "Save page" button. And let's face it, the little rant on your userpage is hardly "isomorphic" to the group-hug sentiment we are meant to embrace as Wikipedia editors, now is it? But I've taken the comments at the bottom out, since I am planning to revamp the page soon, anyway...although I am not sure you will like the new version either, but it will at least be a little less personal, more general. So let's see, shall we?

12. I shall be archiving this page sometime after midnight tonight (GMT), under the title "August 2006", with a link from my "main" talk page. This is not because I feel I have anything to hide (on the contrary) but rather for the reasons explained above. I trust there will be no objections to this, or revert wars to restore it (all comments up to this point will be kept and duly preserved as a record of discussions that occurred, bla bla). Byrgenwulf 09:23, 4 September 2006 (UTC)

## Response

2. As I've pointed out, all of the definitional errors thus far have been yours...100% of them. (See number 7 below.)

4. Language can distort reality, but it is also the only thing that permits its representation and supports complex reasoning about it. A distinction must therefore be made between its invariant (logically necessary) and variable (fallible, falsifiable) aspects. The CTMU does this by distinguishing between distributed syntax and nondistributed forms of expression, and between linguistic potential and actualization. The M=R identity refers primarily to syntactic potential. Syntax, including logic, is the same for everybody, including you.

5. I don't think Langan considers you qualified to ever become a source of embarrassment to him. On the other hand, your peanut gallery notwithstanding, this discussion makes you look absolutely God-awful, and I'm not kidding about that. You haven't won a single point despite all your lexical fussing and fuming, your tone has wandered aimlessly between snide and vicious, and you began the whole mess by transparently finagling the deletion of an article that describes an inarguable form of truth on grounds of "non-notability" after the mass media had announced and described it to millions of people across the world. You seem to have done this to advance your personal atheist-materialist convictions and assuage your inner terror that there might be others in the world who are vastly smarter than you (and there certainly are). All in all, it's a very bad show you've been putting on here. You'll probably come to understand this as you get older. But if not, then forget about philosophy - even if you manage to grovel and wangle your way to an advanced degree, you'll never find your way to the heart of the discipline. You will simply become part of the reason that academic philosophy is now widely regarded as an irrelevant, unregenerate waste of time. (By the way, if you're dead set on working in a philosophy-related field, the history of philosophy might be a better way for you to go - see number 7 below).

6,9,10. I "came along and claimed that such a discussion had already happened, and deposited a list of alleged errors that you had made", because it is a fact that you made those errors in your initial attack on the CTMU article, as part of a content-oriented assault of the kind that was never supposed to occur within any editorial or administrative procedure at Wikipedia. If Wikipedia is ever to improve, its flaws must be recognized. One of its flaws appears to be that it has become glutted with the same kind of vociferous, torch-bearing atheist-materialist fanatic who frequents sites like The Brights, Panda's Thumb, Internet Infidels and Pharyngula, engaging in the same kind of pack behavior that we saw in the CTMU AfD/DR. As you are one of the torch-bearing atheist-materialist fanatics in question, I'm sure that you believe that Wikipedia and the public at large are well-served by your aggressive, rule-bending pursuit of atheist-materialist ideology. However, inasmuch as this sort of

narrow-minded self-confidence is characteristic of zealots everywhere, it does not constitute a valid basis for editorial policy.

7. I'm sorry that Langan's choice of terminology "led you astray". You could easily have solved this by consulting a dictionary - you're not nearly as good with language as you seem to think you are, and need to consult basic references more frequently. In fact, I'll give you an additional pointer. Your main problem with language is really very simple: definitions have underlying models, many of which are based on assumption. When one is switching models, one must be more flexible, reinterpreting language with respect to the new model (either that, or one must coin many more neologisms that even Langan is accused of coining). You clearly want to lock terms into their conventional underlying models, thus destroying their utility for describing any system which departs from conventional background assumptions. This is the (usually insufferable) intellectual strategy of the pedant. That it is yours as well implies that your mind is better suited to the history of philosophy, where the focus remains on old models and ossified definitions, than to cutting-edge philosophy itself. The earlier and better you come to understand this, the longer and more satisfying a career you are likely to enjoy. (I'm not kidding - this is sincere and well-meant advice.)

8. See (6, 9, 10) above. Incidentally, you are not the sole (or even a credible) arbiter of "truth", "reason", "logic" or "reality". These still involve many open questions on which there are many notable viewpoints. In fact, the vast majority of people would say that as a self-professed atheist-materialist "with a chip on his shoulder", you are not even close to being on the mark about those topics. It is thus more than a bit ironic that you bandy these terms about so freely. (Don't be too quick to assume that you're one of the "elites" that Jimmy Wales had in mind when making his notorious some-editors-are-better-than-others comments - you've been caught in way too many errors for that, and your ideological torch is flaming far too brightly.) As far as neutrality is concerned, give us all a break - you're just one of many Wikipedia editors who wouldn't know NPOV if it walked up and bit you in the nose.

11. My User Page deals with a more or less generic set of obvious problems here at Wikipedia, without mentioning names or theories. In stark contrast, your userpage is like a stalker's shrine. Leave it up if you like, but if you do, then anybody can waltz in here any time and respond to its contentious and disparaging remarks, referencing and linking this and other dialogues as extensively as they like. Either resign yourself to this, or tone down your vitriol and depersonalize your concerns. Within a week after coming here, you'd launched the attack that would result in the deletion of the CTMU article; this is now Wikipedia history. Relax, you don't need to specialize in the CTMU any more. Asmodeus 17:06, 4 September 2006 (UTC)

Hmmm....Just a few more. As far as dictionary definitions go, Asmodeus, I think you'll find that they are on my side...and it is not that Langan's words led me astray: they led him astray. You see, your diagnosis of my "major problem with language" is that I do not know that "definitions have underlying models, many of which are based on assumption". I quite agree with your characterisation of definitions, but not with your diagnosis. You see, this was, in fact, a point I have been making about the CTMU since the beginning: principles like "Mind=Reality" are based on the assumptions which underlie words for such complicated entities. We have no a priori reason to assume that syntax helps us overcome these problems, either: on the surface it appears to do so, but then the same could be said of semantics. Syntax, after all, may appear to be the same for everyone, but that is no guarantee that it is "true" in any way: the existence of a common denominator in human cognition tells us nothing more than cognition must be a result of something humans have in common. Like a brain. And all this means is that in some sense our brains must allow us to grow up, mate, and produce more lumps of meat like us (whatever this means in terms outside of human minds); it does not mean that the contents of our brains have much at all to do with what is going on outside them. The existence of a concept like "free will" might be able to sway the argument towards saying that there is some parallel,

but the CTMU does not deploy this as a premise, rather appealing to "self-determinacy" later on to address the free will question. I also realise full well that the CTMU "departs from conventional background assumptions". Nothing inherently wrong with that, of course, provided cogent arguments are made as to why the "replacement assumptions" are superior, and all terms are explicitly redefined accordingly: neither of which things the CTMU does, and the former, of course, also implies the expressly non-tautological character of the theory. Also, the change in "background assumptions" does not, for example, render Langan's distortion or overly loose usage of concepts like "duality" any more meaningful.

Many of my arguments here have been centred on definitions of terms. But, Asmodeus, this is only because you seem to think that a torrent of fancy words is a replacement for a thin sliver of logic, and I have seen fit to point out to you that you are not using the terms properly, which often betrays an underlying ignorance of their actual meanings. Since you have been so ardent in your insistence that I don't know what I am talking about, I thought that perhaps a few empirical counter-examples might cause you to see that the situation is actually the converse of what you think it is; but evidently you can't. Oh well.

And finally, a few words about my motivations, although I would have thought I had made them transparently clear by now. I am indeed an atheist, and I suppose my philosophical position lies a little more on the side of materialism than idealism, but I think that nominalist is a little closer to being accurate. I also, Asmodeus, have no problem admitting that there have been, are currently, and will be in the future, people far more intelligent than myself. So once again, your little pop psychology reading fails. The same could be said for your curious attempt to play Nostradamus while mixing in a good dose of the old bar-bouncer's argumentum ad baculum: I don't have any desire to take career advice from someone who has performed odd jobs and menial labour all his life. You say that as an atheist-materialist with a chip on my shoulder, the vast majority of people would not consider me a viable arbiter of truth, reason, etc. Truth, Asmodeus, is not a democratic property. Reason is not something that the vast majority of people possess in copious quantities. I have yet to be "caught" in a single substantial "error" by any credible authority (and Asmodeus, you are not, whatever you yourself might think, a credible authority); I also know that if someone does point out a genuine error to me, I am well capable of admitting it. Like any good chess player, I will surrender if captured. It's just that you, Asmodeus, have picked all the wrong points here! Byrgenwulf 18:47, 4 September 2006 (UTC)

**Response to Byrgenwulf:** At first, I wasn't going to respond. But since you're still holding fast to all of your original errors and making new errors to boot, and since your supercilious presentation remains as obnoxious as ever, I've had second thoughts. It also occurs to me that you deserve to have this posted to the newly-purged facade of your talk page. However, for the sake of civility, I'll give you one last last chance to avoid that dire eventuality.

59. The dictionary may have been on your side in some other debate. But in this one, it has left you unceremoniously in the lurch.

60. The M=R Principle (of the CTMU) is based on the facts that (1) perception requires percipients, and (2) perception entails syntactic invariants which distribute over percipients and percepts alike. Your major problems with language are serious enough to have prevented you from absorbing these self-evident facts despite repetitive remedial instruction.

61. Syntax is a priori by definition. Tautologically speaking, it thus constitutes an a priori justification of its own validity.

62. If the contents of human brains had nothing in common with what goes on outside them, then the scientific description, explanation, and prediction of objective reality would be impossible. On the other hand, if they do have something in common, it qualifies as "distributed syntax" with respect to both mind and reality, making them identical within its scope, which is coterminous with spacetime

connectivity.

63. In the CTMU, self-determinacy is free will.

64. The CTMU does indeed provide cogent arguments for its departures from conventional background assumptions, and most of them do indeed involve tautology (as defined in reputable English dictionaries).

65. Langan's use of the term "duality" is exact, not "loose". That is, all examples of duality given by Langan conform to the general mathematical meaning of duality. (This has already been explained in response to your absurd contention that specific kinds of mathematical duality lack a common basis despite their conventional description in terms of the general mathematical concept "duality".)

66. I have explained the logic behind my reasoning at every turn, and it clearly beats your own fancily-worded circumlocutions.

67. You have not produced a single valid counterexample to any assertion made by Langan, or me, regarding the CTMU. All of your attempts to do so have been easily disposed of. No amount of doubletalk can change that.

68. Reducing the human mind to a function of "lumps of warm, wet matter", and human beings to mere "lumps of meat", strongly implies that you are a materialist plain and simple. (Your professed "nominalism" is another matter entirely.)

69. It is a mistake, and an extremely unattractive one at that, to peer down your snout at honest, hard-working people "who perform odd jobs and menial labour all their lives". Every one of them is contributing more to humanity in a single week than somebody like you, a lawyerly, labor-shirking verbal fencer who falls far short of his scholarly pretensions, could hope to match in a lifetime.

70. Although you have now been caught in 69 glaring, substantial errors, you have yet to confess to a single one of them. This strongly implies that you are utterly incapable of admitting fault in any meaningful way. (In fact, a psychologist would call this level of incapacity "pathological".) Your claim to the contrary must therefore be counted as another error, bringing your error count to an impressive seventy (70).

But just to close on a positive note, we do seem to be in agreement on one point: truth is indeed not a democratic property. You might try to remember that the next time it occurs to you to manipulate the democratic processes of Wikipedia to vote down a theory so true, and so far over your head, that you'd be better off kissing the sky than confusedly ranting about it. Asmodeus 17:10, 7 September 2006 (UTC)

Hell yeah! [109.148.125.157](#) (talk) 21:10, 29 November 2014 (UTC) internaut

(MosDefLeppard to Byrgenwulf)

I was just reading through this interesting debate between yourself and the other user called Asmodeus when I came across the following outrageous paragraph written by you:

“16. I agree with the institutionalised hacks bit...I am sure that even Langan cannot have such a loathing for institutionalised hacks as I do: he, after all, was not forced to vomit Afrocentrist postmodern neo-Bolshevik propaganda back at his lecturers in order to get a bachelor's degree. Or study fluid dynamics. No, for most worthwhile things I know, I have only myself to thank...”

## -Byrgenwulf

This paragraph suddenly made me realize that I had all along been reading a debate between one person (who was possibly Chris Langan) and a smug, selfish, self-satisfied, bandwagon-hopping, hypocritical imperialist racist fool. (Some of those traits were already rather suggestive even before I got to that point.) Despite the length of time that has expired, I think it is pretty safe to address this issue as if the paragraph was only written yesterday, because, as we all know, people rarely change their views and attitudes in any serious way. The only part of the paragraph I'm concerned about is where you excreted the following words: "(I was) forced to vomit Afrocentrist postmodern neo-Bolshevik propaganda back at (my) lecturers in order to get a bachelor's degree."

I find that statement very interesting for two reasons:

Number one, I would really like to know what exactly these so-called "Afrocentric" courses were that you were "forced" to learn as part of your Philosophy curriculum. While I am not surprised at the suggestion that "neo Bolshevik" ideas are sometimes taught to students in Western universities, I find the idea of students in Western campuses been forced to somehow regurgitate "Afrocentric" philosophies extremely strange. As a black American person, one thing I know about the Western world, including all its gate-keeping institutions like the media, government, academia and so on, is that there is absolutely NOTHING "Afrocentric" about it. On the other hand (as I am sure you would admit during your more sober moments of honest reflection) Western institutions are incredibly and incessantly EUROCENTRIC. In fact, they are so Eurocentric that the word "Eurocentric" itself is barely ever used in speech or writing. This is because it is the default state of Western thought and behavior and is seldom brought under any serious scrutiny or questioning. Therefore, my guess is that, like most people when they are in the business of defending their selfish interests and assuaging or masking their guilt, you were simply taking liberty with the truth when you wrote those words. I suspect that you probably took a course in which you were presented with facts concerning the harmful effects of colonization and western capitalistic imperialism on Africa, and then distorted it as somehow representing a grandiose state of "Afrocentric neo-Bolshevism" on Western Campuses. The word "exaggeration" is not enough to do justice to such dishonesty.

Secondly, I am really curious as to why THAT was the one single thing you chose to spit out as your so-called example of "institutional hackery", out of ALL the ideologies that are constantly and universally being forced on students in Western universities that you could have used? Why not 'Feminism'? Or 'Atheism'? Or why not just 'left-wing ideology' in and of itself? Or why not 'Chinacentrism'? Or 'Eurocentric neo-Bolshevism' (economic socialism)? Why not 'Pro-Muslim' sentimentalism? Or why not just EUROCENTRICISM??? Of ALL the other things you could have spoken about, ALL of which are FAR MORE ubiquitous and characteristic of Western academic and institutional bias and propaganda, you decided to choose the one single thing that barely really exists in Western institutions except in the most orthogonal or superficial way: "Afrocentrism"! Do you realize how DISHONEST it makes you look??? This really speaks a lot about the sort of person you are. Of course, it's always easy to pick on the weakest and most vulnerable class of people. And that's what most egotistical pale-skins like you do.

Let me ask you: if it really is such a bother for you to have so-called "Afrocentric" ideas being rammed down your throat in just one university class for just one semester, as you claim, then HOW do you think we black people deal with having to put up with Eurocentrism and Eurocentric propaganda being constantly shoved in our faces and rammed down our throats from the day we enter school till the day we leave university; and not only in school but EVERYWHERE, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, non-stop??? How do you think THAT feels if you find it so difficult to handle being told about the

abuse and ravaging of African people and resources by people like you for only a couple of hours of your entire life (and mislabeling it by the ridiculous appellation of “Afrocentric Bolshvism”)???? Can you even begin to do the comparison? No, I’m sure you can’t. Because you are a selfish, dishonest and narrow-minded person.

Also, I ABSOLUTELY RESENT you and other pale-skins like yourself habitually smearing the concept of Afrocentrism by verbally linking it with a completely non-related movement like Bolshevism that has absolutely nothing to do with it. People like you like to pretend that you are not aware that the decision of many Afrocentric politicians to associate themselves with Russia during the Cold War era was simply a matter of necessity since the Soviets were the only ones they could turn to for help in their fight against Western tyranny and imperialism. Lipstick-lips like you like to act as if you don’t know that it was merely a strategic association that had NOTHING to do with their actual philosophical beliefs. I’ve got some news for you: I, for example, am as Afrocentric as any black person can be; and I am ALSO as capitalistic and ANTI-SOCIALIST as any person can be. In fact, I would bet that I am far more of an ideological capitalist than you are. Perhaps you’ve never come across the idea of black-capitalist liberationism. If not, I would recommend reading the works of Dr Claud Andersson for a start (or at least listening to some of his speeches, which you can find online).

Now let me explain something to you: The precise problem with the black race (which people like you love to stand on to elevate your sense of self-worth) is that there is very little, if any, Afrocentrism even among black people. Most black people are so psychologically defeated and brainwashed (by anti-black and Eurocentric propaganda) that they have virtually no Afrocentric inclinations whatsoever. Since the world is an extremely competitive place, this is a very dangerous psychological condition to be in. And that is why the black race remains down and miserable. While other races, especially the pale-skins, are shamelessly self-centric and constantly acting in pursuit of their collective interests, blacks, on the other hand, hardly do any such thing. Thus, they lose outright simply by not competing. Meanwhile, of course, red-lips like you regard it as being in your interests to discourage any change of the status quo by sneering upon and casting aspersions on the very concept/mention of “Afrocentrism” even while your own kind continues to indulge and promote its own centrism. I don’t blame you for doing that. But I just want you to know that you are not fooling everyone with your antics.

By the way, I’m guessing from your writing that you are British. Let me ask something: do you think that we black people are the only targets of (white) American insecurity and ego-centrism? One thing that has always baffled and rather amused me is the fact that white British people like yourself are completely unaware of how they are routinely disparaged and negatively (and dishonestly) portrayed by the US media. Do you know that it is a common belief in America that British women (English women specifically) are “ugly” and that British men (English men specifically) are “homosexuals”? And that these beliefs are simply the result of Anglo-phobic American media propaganda? Have you ever noticed how Hollywood always deliberately hires ugly British actresses while they avoid hiring beautiful ones? Do you think they would ever have hired (and promoted) Nicole Kidman if she had been British instead of Australian? You have no idea how your own people are been unfairly disparaged and ridiculed by American ego-centrism and propaganda. But I don’t blame you. It’s much easier to obsess over a relatively powerless and harmless group of people. But I’m just saying this to let you know that, despite what you may stupidly think, “Afrocentrism” is one of the last forms of centrism that people like you should be worrying about.

Greetings and congratulations, you have reached the bottom of the wall of text. So, what do you think? Did this constitute a debunking of Mr. Langan's life's work or does Mr. O'Grady's "soul" now

and forevermore rather unfortunately belong solely to Asmodeus: Prince of Hell, Spirit of Wrath, and King of Demons (or Mr. Langan, as the one onto whom Mr. King-of-Demons apparently conferred such possession)? This seems to be of substance mainly to Messrs. Langan, O'Grady, and King-of-Demons, but I assume you are here because of some vested interest of your own, e.g. you see the CTMU as logically unassailable (like Messrs. Langan and King-of-Demons), or you have wagered something on the demonstrable negation of said unassailability (like Mr. O'Grady). Perhaps you just want to get to the bottom of this whole "CTMU" deal once and for all (like Ind. the-human-typing-these-words). If that's the case, I'd suggest you find the more recent papers available on the CTMU in Cosmos and History and form your own opinions thereof. Thanks for the attention. [2604:2D80:8830:8542:5D3:8190:9EA6:5BB \(talk\)](#) 17:36, 29 November 2018 (UTC)

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